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IN TWO VOLUMES

BY

R. E. HUTTON

CHAPLAIN OF ST. MARGARET'S, EAST GRINSTEAD

With a Preface

BY THE

REV. ALFRED G. MORTIMER, D.D.

RECTOR OF ST. MARK'S, PHILADELPHIA

VOL. II.

Easter to Advent

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THE CROWN OF CHRIST

Liturgical Notes for Eastertide[1]

THE word Easter is derived from the Saxon word Eástre, the name of a goddess. According to Bede the Anglo-Saxons called the spring month Eostermonaht, and Eginhard calls April Ostarmanoth. Ostarâ was the name by which the Germans called the goddess Eástre. Christians, who are not of the German races, call Easter by some modification of the word *pascha*—a word of Jewish origin relating to the Passover, which was kept at the time of our Lord's Passion. The Church, when St. Polycarp came to Rome A.D. 160, had two customs as to keeping Easter. In Rome it was kept on the Sunday following the actual date of the Passover (Nisan 14th). In Asia Proconsularis it was kept on the 14th of the month Nisan, on whatever day of the week it might fall. This difference caused a sharp controversy between the Roman Bishop Victor and Polycrates of Ephesus. It was not until the Council of Nicea that the Asiatic custom (called Quartodeciman) was set aside, and the way in which Easter was to be reckoned was settled.

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[1] Eastertide: from first Evensong of Easter until Nones (3 p.m.) on the Saturday in Whitsun week, inclusive.

Until the twelfth century each day in Easter week was "a day of obligation," *i.e.* a day upon which there is an obligation to be present at Mass and abstain from servile work. In the present day in the Latin Church the Monday and Tuesday in Easter week are "days of devotion"; and in the Anglican Communion the acceptance of this custom is suggested by the provision of a special Epistle and Gospel for these two days. The joyful character of the Easter services was more marked in pre-Reformation times than it is at present in England; for instance, the word Alleluia was constantly repeated in the Mass and Choir office. On Easter Sunday the office was very brief, owing to the fact that the whole night of Holy Saturday was occupied with various services, as it still is in the Eastern Church. Martene says that the short office was continued during Easter week (1) because there would be difficulty in changing it in a week when so many of the newly baptised were present at the full services of the Church for the first time; and (2) because the Sunday office determined the offices for the whole week.

The custom of the whole Church, East and West, has fixed upon Easter as the day upon which all the faithful should receive Holy Communion. The rubric in the Book of Common Prayer is, "And note, that every parishioner shall communicate at the least three times a year, of which Easter is to be one." This rule of at least three communions a year was formerly the rule throughout the West. The Roman Church has, however, changed the law for her members, and now only commands communion once a year—at Easter—for all who belong to her obedience.[1]

---

[1] "In primitiva Ecclesia, quando magna vigebat devotio fidei christianæ, statutum fuit, ut quotidie fideles communicarent; unde Anacletus papa dicit: Peracta consecratione, omnes communicant, qui voluerint ecclesiasticis carere liminibus; sic enim et apostoli statuerunt, et sancta Romana

Easter is thus "the Queen of Feasts," the great "day which the Lord hath made."

The Book of Common Prayer substitutes for the *Venite* on Easter Day certain texts from Holy Writ that speak of the Resurrection; it also appoints special psalms at Morning and Evening Prayer, and a Preface to be said at the daily Eucharist during the octave. In the old Breviary Office for Easter week there is no hymn, but in its place is repeated the Antiphon, "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." The ancient idea seemed to be that the whole octave of Easter should be reckoned as one great "Lord's day."

On Low Sunday—*Dominica in Albis*, as it is called—the newly baptised laid aside the white baptismal robe which they had worn at the services during the week.

OFFICE HYMNS.

Vespers. *Ad regias Agni dapes.*
"The Lamb's high banquet."—*A. and M.*, 128.

Matins. *Rex sempiterne coelitum.*
"O Christ, the heaven's Eternal King."—*A. and M.*, 129.

Lauds. *Aurora coelum purpurat.*
"Light's glittering morn bedecks the sky."—*A. and M.*, 126.

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tenet Ecclesia." Postmodum vero, diminuto fervore fidei, Fabianus papa indulsit, "ut si non frequentius, saltem ter in anno omnes communicent, scilicet in Pascha, Pentecoste, et Natali Domini." . . . . Postmodum propter iniquitatis abundantiam, refrigescente charitate multorum, statuit Innocentius III., "ut saltem semel in anno, scilicet in Pascha, fideles communicent." *Summa Theo.* S. Thomas Aq., pars iii. 2. lxxx. art. x. 4.

I.

EASTER DAY

The Spirit and Work of Eastertide

Prophecy

"I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto Me; for I have redeemed thee.

"Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified Himself in Israel." (Isa. xliv. 22, 23.)

Jesus Christ

"I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." (St. John xvi. 22.)

The Soul

"This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." (Ps. cxviii. 24.)

I.

The Spirit and Work of Eastertide

THE morning of the Resurrection! Even in the order of nature there is nothing but joy and the coming of new life in this springtime of the world. The very air is full of the songs of the birds, and fragrant with the first fresh scents of the forests and meadows, as they clothe themselves again with foliage and verdure after the long days of wintry gloom, decay, and death.

"See the world's beauty budding forth anew,
Shows with the Lord His gifts returning too!
The earth with flowers is deck'd, the sky serene;
The heavenly portals glow with brighter sheen.
The greenwood-leaves, the flowering meadows tell
Of Christ, triumphant over gloomy hell.
Hail! Festal Day! for evermore ador'd,
Wherein God conquer'd hell, and upward soar'd."

The spirit of Easter is a spirit of holy joy, of quiet triumph, of hymns of victory and exulting faith. The Lord is risen! What more can the glad Church of the redeemed say? She can only repeat it again and again with multiplied Alleluias. Words seem out of place, for the joy of the Church is too deep to express itself in the ordinary language of the world—and yet it is to the world that she brings the glad tidings of the victory of her Lord. The resurrection life of the Master is to be lived upon earth during the great Forty Days, though withdrawn for the most part from the sight of men. No wonder then that the earth is glad and beautiful in this foregleam of the coming day, when He shall fulfil His promise, "Behold, I make all things new."[1]

The risen Lord may fitly be understood as speaking to His people in the words of the prophet Isaiah, "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto Me; for I have redeemed thee."[2] The darkness of Good Friday has passed away—the thick cloud of the sins of the world has been blotted out, and now our Lord fulfils the promise made to His apostles, "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice"; He returns to them in order that they may return to faith and hope in Him; "return unto Me; for I have redeemed thee."

I.

In the risen life of our Lord during these Forty Days, spiritual writers see a very special type of the Christian life, passing out from the mere conquest of sin, and going forward through the imitation of Christ in His life before the Passion to a closer union with Him.

The Resurrection of our Lord may either be considered as the summit of the Illuminative Way, or as the entrance into that more entire union with Christ, known as the Unitive Way. It may be that it is the bridge of light leading from the lower to the higher of these two states, even as these Forty Days are the link that binds the life of our Master before His Passion with His glorified life that begins at the Ascension. The soul that has given itself to God, and has so far conquered sin as to live in habitual grace, has very truly "put off the old man,"[1] has died to sin, and is living already a risen life according to the teaching of St. Paul: "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."[2]

---

[1] Rev. xxi. 5.

[2] Isa. xliv. 22.

During His life before the Resurrection the intuitive vision of God was ever with our Lord. This vision brought joy and peace to the higher region of His soul—His spirit. This beatitude, by the Divine will, was not felt in the lower part of the human soul of our Lord, nor in His sacred body. In these two regions of His life He—the Innocent—willed to bear the burden that ought to have fallen on the guilty. We have, therefore, again and again seen Him as the Man of Sorrows, weighed down with the sadness of a sin-stained world, experiencing all the horror of darkness, bowed down in the garden of the Agony beneath the load of our iniquity, a prey to all the anguish, all the bitterness that ever tortured the heart of man. We have seen Him scourged, crowned with thorns, crucified, and pierced with five wounds. We have seen Him dead in His Mother's arms; we have watched that last humiliation—His burial. And now "He is risen," the conditions of His life are altogether changed, and during these Forty Days the Beatific Vision floods with joy His entire being—body and soul. It fills with a changeless happiness His whole soul, and, as it were, overflows and illuminates with a visible radiance the sacred countenance of the risen Lord.

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[1] Col. iii. 9.

[2] Col. iii. 3.

How can we dare to hope to follow our Lord in this new life? And yet it is to the imitation of the risen life that we are called. St. Paul writes, "Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."[1] Indeed, St. Paul takes the Resurrection as the type of all Christian life. By baptism we die to sin and rise to a new life in Christ: "We are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection."[2] We are then called to this new life from the moment of our baptism; but because of the strength of temptation there is necessarily a warfare in every Christian life—a time when the question is decided whether or no we will serve Christ, conquer temptation, and turn from wilful sin. This time is, we know, the period that spiritual writers call the Purgative way of the soul, the time when the soul purifies itself through the merits and power of the Precious Blood, the time of more real conversion or turning from sin to God. Advent is especially the season during which the Church symbolises and renews the work of the Purgative way. It is then, more than at other times, that she calls upon her children to repent, to "make straight the way of the Lord."

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[1] Rom. vi. 9-11.

[2] Rom. vi. 4, 5.

As soon as the Incarnate Word begins His life on earth, the Church would have us more particularly fix our eyes upon His example, and grow in friendship with Him through continual association with the mysteries of the three-and-thirty years.

Guided by the Divine Master, the Church desires that during Lent and Passiontide we should conform our life to the pattern of His life in the mystical crucifixion of the threefold evil of our nature, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. We are to be crucified with Christ, nailed with Him to the Cross, buried with Him, so that at Easter His life may fill our life without let or hindrance. In the Easter Festival, therefore, there has always been a special reference to Holy Baptism, and a kind of renewal of its effects. In the Collect for Easter Even the three stages of spiritual life—Purgative, Illuminative, and Unitive—are touched upon.

"Grant, O Lord, that as we are baptised into the death of Thy blessed Son our Saviour Jesus Christ (Purgative); so by continual mortifying our corrupt affections we may be buried with Him (Illuminative); and that through the grave and gate of death we may pass to our joyful resurrection (Unitive)."

We are, as it were, incorporated into Jesus Christ; we are dead with Him; with Him we go down into the grave; but only that with Him we may arise to a new life of union with God. He infuses into us His own risen life: this is what St. Paul means when he says that Christ was "delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."[1]

During the Forty Days which followed His Resurrection, Jesus Christ continually thought of the heaven He was about to re-enter. Even so He desires that, "among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found."[2]

The Resurrection is a continual invitation—"Sursum corda," "Lift up your hearts"; and the Church replies for each of her children—"Habemus ad Dominum," "We lift (have lifted) them up unto the Lord."

The joy of the Resurrection is, or should be, ours. It flows from a peace that the world cannot give or take away; the "peace of God" resulting from the putting away of that which is out of harmony with the mind of God—that is, sin.

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[1] Rom. iv. 25.

[2] Collect for Fourth Sunday after Easter.

There may still be for each of us many anxieties, many sorrows, many bitter disappointments and griefs in life; for God does not promise tranquillity, but quite the opposite. Yet in spite of all this there will be joy in God, and peace, and rest, through the abiding union with Him Who is "our peace." As we conquer sin we grow in likeness to Jesus Christ; and as we become like Him we share, through an ever-growing closeness of union, the joy, the peace, and the brightness of the Resurrection life. "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you."[1]

> "Easter triumph, Easter joy,
> Sin alone can this destroy;
> From sin's power do Thou set free
> Souls new-born, O Lord, in Thee."

II.

During the part of the Paschal season that precedes the Ascension we shall therefore strive to enter into this joy of the Church; we shall endeavour to approach all the offices with the thought of the risen Lord in our mind; we shall find in the psalms continual references to the triumph, victory, and joy of the Resurrection. In the psalms specially chosen for

---

[1] St. John xvi. 22.

Easter Day this of course will be quite easy.[1] The victory of Jesus Christ over the plots of those who condemned and crucified Him, as well as over the "power of darkness," is commemorated in Ps. ii. "The kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His Anointed. . . . He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn: the Lord shall have them in derision . . . Thou shalt bruise them with a rod of iron, and break them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

The triumph of the risen Lord in the brightness of His rising is sung in Ps. lvii. "Awake up, my glory; awake, lute and harp: I myself will awake right early," —are words that commemorate the new life issuing from the garden tomb "as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week" on that first Easter morning.

In Ps. cxi. we are told: "The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. His work is worthy to be praised"; an echo of the jubilant worship of the Church as on this Festival she sings again in her *Te Deum*—which has been left unsung during Lent—"We praise Thee, O God; we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. All the earth doth worship Thee, the Father everlasting. . . . Thou art the King of glory, O Christ. Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father. . . . When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers."

[1] Pss. (M.) ii., lvii., cxi.; (E.) cxiii., cxiv., cxviii.

And so in the proper psalms for Evensong there is a continual call to joy and praise: "Praise the Lord, ye servants; O praise the Name of the Lord." And this praise is because of the fulfilment of His words, "I have redeemed thee." The true Israel has been brought out of the mystical Egypt of sin and death, and so the Psalm *In exitu Israel* is full of a new meaning. The same may be truly said of the words of Psalm cxviii., "The same stone which the builders refused is become the head-stone in the corner."

The Church is built indeed "upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets," but Jesus Christ is the "head corner-stone."[1] It is from this psalm that the Church borrows the motto for her Easter teaching; "This is the day which the Lord hath made: we will rejoice and be glad in it."

But not only in these special psalms shall we find reference to the Resurrection, but in almost every psalm sung during the Paschal season we may find some appropriate words telling of one or other of the many mysteries of the "day which the Lord hath made." In the depths of Holy Scripture are embedded jewels that may (if we have eyes to see them) be dug out and set in every portion of that sacred crown which the Liturgical year places upon the brow of Christ.

Throughout Eastertide we shall find our thoughts at Holy Communion more especially turned towards the worship of the risen Lord; congratulating Him on

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[1] See Collect for SS. Simon and Jude.

His victory, and receiving the Bread of Life as the germ of our own immortality, the "pledge of future glory," given unto us, the children of the Resurrection. "O sacrum convivium, in quo Christus sumitur, recolitur memoria passionis ejus, mens impletur gratia, et futuræ gloriæ nobis pignus datur. Alleluia."—"O sacred Banquet, in which Christ is received, the memory of His Passion recalled, the mind filled with grace, and the pledge of future glory bestowed upon us. Alleluia."

At the Ascension the Easter spirit of joy passes into a more profound union with the spirit of worship, as the Church contemplates the great glory of her ascended Lord.

It is the atmosphere of the Book of the Revelation that henceforth surrounds Jesus Christ. He is known no longer after the flesh, all shadow of humiliation has for ever passed from Him. He has gone through the darkness into the clear, bright, noontide light of the heavenly Jerusalem. Henceforth all love, all joy, all friendship with Him, has something of holy fear mingled with it; holy fear that is deepening reverence, not hindering our coming boldly to the throne of grace. St. John, the beloved disciple, when he beheld Jesus Christ after the Ascension writes: "And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."[1] This spirit of loving awe and worship breaks out in the *Gloria in excelsis*—when the Church confesses before her Lord: "Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord; Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost art most high in the glory of God the Father."

At the Ascension, our desire of heaven and our detachment from earthly things are increased by the departure of "the Forerunner," Who for us is entered "within the veil"[2] to prepare our place.

The coming of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost is the completion of God's gifts: this Divine Spirit comes to perfect all that Jesus Christ "began both to do and teach."[3] We shall strive to realise the great might and power—the immense force—of God the Holy Ghost. He comes from the throne of God to illuminate the souls of men—to show them their vocation and its end—to give them grace to commit themselves wholly to the following of the Divine light; He comes to perfect our union with our Divine Lord, as the members are joined together in the unity of the body.

The Ascension opens up the way to the perfect Unitive life of heaven; the Holy Spirit comes to lead us along the Unitive way. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."[4] St. Paul says, "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit."[5]

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[1] Rev. i. 17, 18.
[2] Heb. vi. 19.
[3] Acts i. 1.
[4] Rom. viii. 14.
[5] 1 Cor. vi. 17.

The mind that was in Christ Jesus is the mind that we should seek after, in order that it may become our own. But this "mind" or spirit is formed in us by the Holy Spirit. It is His work to perfect the union of our mind or understanding with the mind of God. The mind dwelling continually upon the glorious gospel of Almighty God must tend to union with God. "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

From this knowledge comes a union of the will of man with the will of God. The affections which spring from this union are: *joy*, that He is what He is; *praise* and *thanksgiving* for His gifts and graces, more especially for the gift of the Holy Ghost; *desire* to see Him as He is, and meanwhile to love and obey Him perfectly; *zeal* for His glory; *confidence* in His power and goodness; *fear* of His justice—not, however, that servile fear which is cast out by love, but the holy fear referred to already—the filial, reverential fear that dreads to be separated from God. To these affections will necessarily be added *contrition* for sin, springing from the love of God alone; for the higher life of union with God always exercises the acts of the lower degrees of spiritual life, although in a more perfect manner than they are exercised by those who are actually in the lower states of the Purgative and Illuminative ways. From these degrees of union there comes a growing likeness of the soul to God in Christ

Jesus—the union of similitude, as it is called. High as the ideal is, we may not refuse to strive after its attainment, for our Lord has said, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

PASSAGES FOR READING.

(1) *Praise.* Exod. xv. 1–20. This hymn of praise mystically commemorates the triumph of Jesus Christ over the "power of darkness." In His Easter victory the redeemed have a share.

(2) *Thanksgiving.* 1 Chron. xxix. 10–19. The power, glory, and victory of Jesus Christ are the meritorious cause of our power, and contribute to the building up of the spiritual temple. (See 1 Cor. iii. 9–16.)

(3) *Desire.* Ps. xlii. The soul desires the full communion with God that will be granted to it in the Beatific Vision. (See Isa. xxxiii. 17.)

(4) *Zeal.* 2 Kings xxiii. 21–26. We may learn from Josiah to keep the "Christian Passover" (Easter) with great devotion, and zealously destroy the idols that are set up in our own hearts.

(5) *Confidence.* 1 Sam. xvii. 45–52. Like David, we should trust in God for our spiritual victories; in "the Name of the Lord of Hosts" we shall conquer the great powers of evil that threaten us.

(6) *Fear.* Acts ix. 31. After conflict rest. *In cœlo quies*—in heaven they who have fought the good fight "rest from their labours."

II

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

Calm after Storm

Prophecy

"For at His word the stormy wind ariseth, which lifteth up the waves. . . . They are carried up to the heaven, and down again to the deep: their soul melteth away because of the trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end. So when they cry unto the Lord in their trouble: He delivereth them out of their distress. For He maketh the storm to cease: so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad, because they are at rest: and so He bringeth them unto the haven where they would be." (Ps. cvii. 25–30.)

Jesus Christ

"He arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm." (St. Mark iv. 39.)

The Soul

"My Lord and my God!" "O Lord God of hosts, who is like unto Thee? . . . Thou rulest the raging of the sea. Thou stillest the waves thereof when they arise." (St. John xx. 28; Ps. lxxxix. 9, 10.)

II.

Calm after Storm

> "Fierce raged the tempest o'er the deep,
> Watch did Thine anxious servants keep,
> But Thou wast wrapped in guileless sleep,
> Calm and still."

THREE of the four Evangelists record the miracle wrought by our Lord in stilling the tempest. In this, as in all our Lord's miracles, there are many lessons that we may learn, and many mysteries are symbolised. The chief lessons are given us in the account of this miracle as recorded by St. Matthew.[1] It was evening; our Lord had spent the day in teaching; weary, no doubt, with His day's work, and seeing the crowds still pressing around Him, He "gave commandment to depart unto the other side" of the lake. "And when they had sent away the multitude, they took Him even as He was in the ship. And there arose a great storm of wind." St. Matthew says, "there arose a great tempest in the sea." The word he uses for "tempest" is one (σεισμός) very seldom used for a storm at sea; it is a word that expresses an earthquake, and suggests the coming down of one of those violent squalls that not infrequently visit lakes surrounded by mountains. The disciples, accustomed as they were to the sea and its storms, were yet terrified by the unusual violence of this "great tempest." Meanwhile our Lord is "in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow."[1]

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[1] St. Matt. xiv. (cf. St. Mark iv. 35).

But the disciples had not yet learned what the presence of Jesus in their midst must mean. They were not lacking in belief that, if He knew of their danger, He could save them, for they had often before witnessed His power; but they had not yet a knowledge of the mystery of His Person: to them it seemed that there was imminent peril of death, and so in terror they rouse and rebuke Him with the cry, "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" or, as we read in St. Matthew's Gospel, "Lord, *save us;* we perish." "And He saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" They had forgotten, or had not yet faith strong enough to believe, that sleeping or waking the Divine Master was ever careful of His own elect. "I sleep, but My heart waketh."[2] "Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord Himself is thy keeper. . . . . The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in."[3]

I.

St. Mark and St. Luke make the stilling of the tempest to come first, and then when all was calm, our Lord having thus shown His power, turns to the disciples and rebukes their want of faith. This seems indeed to be the more probable order of the events, for the disciples would be the better able to listen to His words when their fear of immediate danger had passed. Their fault "lay not in seeking help of Him, for this indeed became them well; but in the *excess* of the terror which they displayed: '*Why are ye so fearful?*' in their counting it possible that the ship which bore their Lord could ever perish."[1]

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[1] St. Mark iv. 38. [2] Song of Sol. v. 2. [3] Ps. cxxi. 4, 5, 8.

Maldonatus says that "Christ spoke to the winds, the tempest, and to disease and similar things, as if addressing evil spirits,"—Then He arose and *rebuked* the winds and the sea."—Tempests and diseases are often the works of the powers of darkness.

David speaks of God sending "evil angels" among those who provoked Him in the wilderness;[2] and it was by the power of Satan that "there came a great wind from the wilderness and smote the four corners of the house" where the sons and daughters of Job were eating and drinking, so that it "fell upon the young men" and killed them.[3]

But our Lord *rebuked* the winds and the sea, and "His rebuke is not unheard nor unheeded; for, 'not willingly' was the creature thus 'made subject to vanity.'[4] Constituted as man's handmaid at the first, it is only reluctantly, and submitting to an alien force, that Nature rises up against man and becomes the instrument of his hurt and harm. In the hour of her wildest uproar she knew the voice of Him Who was her rightful Lord, gladly returned to her allegiance to Him, and in this to her place of proper service to that race of which He had become the Head, and whose prerogatives He was reclaiming and reasserting once more. And to effect all this His *word* alone was sufficient; He needed not, as the greatest of His servants had needed, an instrument of power, apart from Himself, with which to do His mighty work; not the rod of Moses,[1] and as little the mantle of Elijah;[2] but at His word only 'the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.'"[3]

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[1] Abp. TRENCH.

[2] Ps. lxxviii. 49.

[3] Job i. 19.

[4] Rom. viii. 20.

It was an assertion by the Word of God of that power which belonged to Him as Creator: "The world was made by Him," writes St. John; and again, "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made."[4]

The Eternal Father is indeed "the Creator of heaven and earth," but He created by His Word. It was most fit then that in the restoration—the recreation—"He sent His Word, and healed"[5] that which the curse had marred. And no sooner had our Lord thus manifested His power than "the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?"

An old expositor has somewhat boldly said, "This power of the Lord's word, this admiration of them that were with Him in the ship, holy David had predicted in psalm, saying, 'They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep.'[1] And as in the spiritual world the inward is ever shadowed forth by the outward, we may regard this outward fact but as the clothing of an inward truth which, in the language of this miracle, the Lord declares unto men. He sets Himself forth as the true Prince of peace,[2] the speaker of peace to the troubled and storm-stirred heart of man."

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[1] Exod. xiv. 16, 21, 22. [2] 2 Kings ii. 14.
[3] Abp. TRENCH. [4] St. John i. 3. [5] Ps. cvii. 20.

"We shall do no wrong," says Archbishop Trench, "to the literal truth of this and other of Christ's miracles, by recognising the character, at once symbolic and prophetic, which many of them also bear, and this among the number. The sea is evermore in Scripture the symbol of the restless and sinful world."

"But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt."[3]

"The waters which thou sawest . . . are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues."[4]

II.

In thinking over this miracle of the stilling of the tempest we can hardly forget the story of Jonah, the prophet whose history our Lord Himself connected with His Resurrection. There are certain points of resemblance between the voyage of Jonah and the story of the miracle we have been considering.

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[1] Ps. cvii. 23, 24.
[2] Isaiah ix. 6, 7.
[3] Isa. lvii. 20.
[4] Rev. xvii. 15.

No sooner has Jonah entered the ship than "the Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken. Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god. . . . But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep. So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not." We remember how inquiry leads the mariners to the conviction that the storm is a judgment upon them for having Jonah in the ship, and thus helping him to disobey the command of God to go to Nineveh. "Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous. And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you." The men shrank from this, but in the end, seeing no way of escape, they cast the prophet into the sea, and "the sea ceased from her raging. Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights."[1]

Our Lord referred to this story of the Old Testament as a type of His own burial and resurrection—thus, at all events, in this particular point, making Jonah a type of Himself; "As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."[1]

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[1] Jonah i.

There are, however, in the story of Jonah points that seem quite the reverse of those in the miracle of the stilling of the tempest. Jonah is flying from the face of God; the storm is a judgment from God to punish the prophet's disobedience; the storm is only calmed by the sacrifice of the guilty man.

And yet are not these apparent points of difference capable of an explanation that will enable us to see in Jonah a type of our Lord before, as well as after, the men have cast him into the sea? Jonah is guilty of disobedience, and is therefore a fit representative of man.

The sin of the first man Adam was disobedience, and the immediate result was that "Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God." When the Second Adam came to undo the work of the first, it is said, "the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."[2]

Jesus Christ became the representative of fallen man, and as such "He was despised and rejected of men." He was taken by His fellow-men and put to death—and yet, even as Jonah, not unwilling, but by His own choice; He gave His life "a ransom for many."[3] Of

[1] St. Matt. xii. 40. [2] Is. liii. 6. [3] St. Matt. xx. 28.

Him it was indeed true to say, "all Thy waves and storms are gone over Me."

Looking then at our Lord as the representative of sinful men, we see in His voluntary surrender of Himself to death the fulfilment of the type given to the world in the prophet Jonah. The sacrifice of Jonah allays the storm and brings calm and peace. Even so Jesus Christ, by His sacrifice—by the blood of His Cross—has "made peace."[1]

On the other hand, our Lord is not only true Man, but also true God, and in the miracle of the stilling of the tempest, when "He arose and rebuked the wind and the sea, and there was a great calm"—we have the type of His Divine power manifested in His Resurrection.

III.

The first storm that ever vexed the human heart was around the tree of the "knowledge of good and evil"[2] in Eden. The storm was stirred up by the tempter. The wind of temptation prevailed, and carried the human race far from God.

Who can enter into the mystery of that first disturbance of the peace of God in the heart of man? Hitherto the creature had lived without the knowledge of evil in harmony with the Creator. God Himself had been the companion of man, and had walked with him beneath the trees of an unfallen world. The first temptation was to disobey; the first sin was disobedience; and the first instinct of fallen man was to hide from God. "They heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden."[1] We may well believe when our first parents had sinned and disobeyed God that "the eyes of them both were opened."[2] They realised what the knowledge of evil meant—loss of peace, a sense of confusion and unrest, a sickening foreboding of coming disaster and death. Without forming the words, they doubtless cried in their mute despair to the God Who was near, "Master, Master, we perish." Then "the Lord God called unto Adam"; He rebuked his want of faith, his lack of trust; He reproved the tempter; and while He spoke plainly of the results of this sin, He gave the promise of a Redeemer, Who by suffering should restore peace. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil had brought death; the promised "Seed of the woman" should be shown another tree that should bring life. That tree was the Cross of Christ.

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[1] Col. i. 20.

[2] Gen. ii. 9.

> "God his Maker, sorely grieving
> That the first-made Adam fell,
> When he ate the fruit of sorrow,
> Whose reward was death and hell,
> Noted then this wood, the ruin
> Of the ancient wood to quell."

On that tree "the Seed of the woman" should be bruised by the tempter, pierced with five wounds. Around that tree, too, the storm should rage fiercely; the winds and the waves should do their worst, but this time they should not prevail. Out of the wood of this tree God would fashion His ark of refuge.

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[1] Gen. iii. 8.

[2] Gen. iii. 7.

> "For a shipwrecked race preparing
> Harbour, like the ark of old."

But think what it cost Him. Think how "there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves." Around the Cross on Good Friday there met all the fury of the passions of evil men. The cruelty of the soldiers, the mockery of the chief priests; "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the Cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him; for He said, I am the Son of God."[1] "The thieves also, which were crucified with Him, cast the same in His teeth."

What was this but the old temptation to acquire the kingdoms of the world without the suffering He had willed to pay as their price, without drinking "the cup" of the Agony? And then there was no ray of light; for even when He looked upon loving hearts He beheld only grief, or doubt and fear and perplexity.

"There stood by the Cross of Jesus His Mother,"[2] faithful unto death; but the sword is piercing her soul, and the sight of her martyrdom can only add to the grief of her Son. The chosen disciples are all absent, "afar off," except the beloved John whose love, "strong as death," keeps him near the Master in spite of possible danger to himself from the wrathful malignity of the chief priests. Nor are there wanting in the natural world signs of the tempest. The sun no longer beats down with its fiery heat upon Calvary. The air is still, the light is dying out, and though it is noonday there is a gathering darkness, and the signs of coming storm. "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"[1]

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[1] St. Matt. xxvii. 42, 43.

[2] St. John xix. 25.

Now is fulfilled the prophecy, "All Thy waves and storms are gone over Me." The very light of God's presence is hidden from the dying Redeemer. The "prince of the power of the air," who is also the prince of "the darkness of this world,"[2] has done his worst—he has bruised the "Seed of the woman"—he has stirred up a great tempest. But "Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost."[3] In the midst of the storm He fell asleep. "And, behold, the veil of the Temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened."[4] The storm did not cease while He slept on the Cross, but rather it raged more fiercely, so that they who beheld it "feared greatly."

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[1] St. Matt. xxvii. 45, 46.

[2] Eph. vi. 12.

[3] St. Matt. xxvii. 50.

[4] St. Matt. xxvii. 51, 52.

St. Matthew tells us that it was "when the even was come" that Jesus, weary with the day's work, fell asleep in the boat, and slept while the tempest raged, and the disciples feared greatly.

Even so now, in the evening He is laid to rest in the garden tomb, weary with all the work of His Passion. But the storm is not abated. The chief priests still plot and scheme, for they remember to have heard Him say, "After three days I will rise again." They have no desire to awake the dead Christ, but they are anxious in their blind fury to secure His body, "lest His disciples come by night, and steal Him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead."

Pilate somewhat scornfully gives them the guard that they ask. "Ye have a watch; go your way, make" the sepulchre "as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch."[1]

The disciples, however, far from desiring to steal away the body in order to proclaim a false resurrection, have even less knowledge than their enemies of the teaching of their Lord. The storm of grief and fear has, for the time, taken away all hope. They will embalm the body of Him Whom they have loved and lost, lest corruption should mar it, but they have no thought of seeing Him alive again, no courage to devise such a plot as a pretended resurrection. They had hoped all along "that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel,"[1] but they are disappointed and perplexed at the apparent defeat of their Master. Had He deceived them? They could not think it possible; yet all seemed dark, and the future hopeless. They had better, so perhaps they thought, go back to their ordinary occupations, and give up all idea of a special vocation, all dreams of a place in the restored kingdom of Israel.

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[1] St. Matt. xxvii. 63–66.

The grief of Mary Magdalene, the doubts of the disciples, the perplexity of the people, the angry, guilty schemes of the chief priests and the Pharisees, were all so many voices calling to the sleeping Christ to arise. The storm raged in various ways in the hearts of all those who had been with Christ in His Passion. It was now time that He should awake to reprove, to rebuke, to comfort, to restore lost peace.

It seemed to the sleeping Christ that He heard voices, "Master, Master, we perish! Lord, save us, we perish! Carest Thou not that we perish?"

These speechless voices of the heart called aloud to the Sleeper. It seemed as if He hasted to grant what was asked—to still the tempest, rebuke the winds and the sea, reprove the doubts, and restore calm and peace.

He must sleep in death for three days and three nights, but He will shorten them to the utmost; on "the third day He rose again." "Then He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm." To St. Mary Magdalene and the other holy women—seeking "the living among the dead," "much perplexed," "afraid"—He speaks by His angel; "Fear not ye," "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen; remember how He spake unto you when He was yet in Galilee."[1]

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[1] St. Luke xxiv. 21.

To St. Peter the sight of the linen clothes lying in such order as to reprove the idea that the body had been hastily stolen, brings wonder; to St. John the meaning of these garments thus arranged is made clear —"he saw, and believed."[2]

To the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, the risen Lord Himself draws near, and reproves their doubts. "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?"[3]

To St. Thomas He speaks in rebuke of his want of faith—"Be not faithless, but believing."[4]

And so to each in turn He brought peace; the winds and the waves of doubt and fear He rebuked, and "there was a great calm."

"Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you."[1]

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[1] St. Luke xxiv. 5, 6.
[2] St. John xx. 8.
[3] St. Luke xxiv. 25, 26.
[4] St. John xx. 27.

> "Save, Lord, we perish, was their cry,
> O save us in our agony.
> Thy word above the storm rose high,
> Peace, be still.
>
> "The wild winds hushed; the angry deep
> Sank, like a little child, to sleep;
> The sullen billows ceased to leap,
> At Thy will."

It was then by obedience "unto death, even the death of the Cross,"[2] that the Divine Master fashioned out the Ark of His Church. It was when "He arose" that He gave her His peace. "He maketh the storm to cease, so that the waves thereof are still."

The effect of our Lord's words, when "He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea," was that "there was a great calm."[3]

The sea was no longer "tossed to and fro," but calm and unruffled; the winds, no longer boisterous, played gently over its surface.

When Jesus Christ arose from the dead, and drew near to the perplexed and terrified disciples, He again spoke words of peace. He "saith unto them, Peace be unto you." The words were spoken with Divine authority; they bestowed peace. How then did this peace affect the Apostles? In the first place, it was the peace of restored confidence that our Lord gave to His disciples. They had lost—so they thought—that watchful presence of Christ, which had given them courage and security—they had lost their Teacher, Master and Friend. In the storm-tossed boat they had felt, if He were awake, they need not despair, but while He slept they thought He could not watch over them. Even so, when He slept in death, there seemed nothing before them but disaster. But now there came to them through His new presence a return of their old confidence. The danger from the Jews, or from whatever other source peril might threaten, they could face now that He was once more by their side. They knew already His strange power, but now the conviction came to them with a new force, since to see Him in their midst meant that death itself had been conquered.

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[1] St. John xx. 19.
[2] Phil. ii. 8.
[3] St. Matt. viii. 26.

"This is a primary effect of Christ's blessing of peace, whispered from age to age in the upper chambers of Christian souls. It distracts attention from things without. It does not destroy them. Sickness, death, the loss of friends, the opposition of those who have no true faith in and love for Jesus Christ, the bad tempers, the prejudices, the follies of those around us, the troubles and heartaches of the natural life, remain as before. But they no longer absorb attention. The eye of the soul is turned upward; it is fixed on the Divine and the Eternal. These outward troubles still have their importance. But they are seen in their true proportions; they do not obscure the higher realities.

They are not feared. Jesus has said, 'Peace be unto you.'"[1]

Again, the return of their Lord from the dead restored to the Apostles a knowledge of their vocation. They had left all to follow Jesus Christ, but they had only in part understood what was involved in their acceptance of the call—"Follow Me." The Passion and death had seemed to cut short all that they hoped for—the coming of the kingdom of the Messiah, and their own share in its government. They had, up to the time of our Lord's death, "trusted that it had been He that should have redeemed Israel" from the Roman bondage, and restored the kingdom to its former, or to even greater, magnificence. They had been anxious as to their worldly position—had disputed as to who should have the pre-eminence, misunderstanding the Master's words, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me; that ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."[2] They had dreamed—in spite of much else in the teaching of their Master—of a temporal, earthly sovereignty; and consequently had been utterly dismayed at the final defeat of their Lord—His death and burial. But now that He is with them once more, the old hope revives. They do not even now at all understand the full truth, or the

[1] Dr. LIDDON, *Easter Sermons*, xix.

[2] St. Luke xxii. 29, 30.

meaning of their call to the Apostolate; but still the vocation is not at an end, for the Master has come back clothed with a strange new life, that fills them with awe even while they rejoice in the sight of His presence. And so when they heard the gracious words, "Peace be unto you,"[1] the Apostles felt all the joy and rest that come from the passing away of unsettled perplexity as to the future.

No doubt He, their Lord, had a work for them to do; they need not feel that it had been a mistake to obey His call, that the years had been wasted in which they had heard His voice, and followed Him from place to place. He would make all clear in time, and appoint to each of them their own special place in the kingdom that doubtless He would now speedily restore to Israel. The words "Peace be unto you" meant therefore the restoration of an object in life to the Apostles, the end of doubt as to their vocation, and a renewal of the invitation, "Follow Me."

IV.

After the calm had been granted to their prayer, we read: "But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?"[2]

The Resurrection is the witness to our Lord's Divine Nature, as the Passion witnessed to the truth of His Humanity. It was the evidence of the five wounds—

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[1] St. John xx. 19.

[2] St. Mark iv. 31.

telling of His weakness as Man—that led St. Thomas to cry out, "My Lord and my God!"[1]

In every doubt, in every trial, in loss, in sickness, in death itself, God wills that we should feel His Presence near. His Cross, His wounds, tell us of His sympathy; His Resurrection tells us of His power. We do not always understand this when the trial is upon us—we distrust His love, His watchfulness—He sleeps, and we are in danger—"Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" "Peace be unto you!" We lift our eyes to see Who thus speaks to us, and lo! we see that a new Form is by our side. "Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself."[2]

If the Master bears five wounds, should the disciple escape all hurt? Must all trial, all sorrow be *His*, all joy, all peace be *ours?* If so, how are we like Him? Where is the bearing of the Cross, the following the example of His patience? He asks some such questions, He opens our understanding, and in proving the need of His own Passion illuminates the way of the Cross in which we are walking so complainingly. "Ought not Christ to have suffered?"[3] Ought not the disciple to be "as his Master"?[4]

"And when He had thus spoken, He showed them His hands and His feet."[5]

Yes, it must be so; we must learn to recognise Christ as with us, even though He seems to sleep; we must trust Him, although He allows the storms and the waves to beat against the frail ship, and threaten our destruction. Fear not; He lives, He watches over us, He neither slumbers nor sleeps; but He allows us to be conformed to the likeness of His death, in order that we may be in the likeness of His Resurrection.

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[1] St. John xx. 28.
[2] St. Luke xxiv. 38, 39.
[3] St. Luke xxiv. 26.
[4] St. Luke vi. 40.
[5] St. Luke xxiv. 40.

"Fear not; . . . I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."[1]

"So, when our life is clouded o'er,
And storm-winds drift us from the shore,
Say, lest we sink to rise no more,
'Peace, be still.'"

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[1] Rev. i. 17, 18.

PASSAGES FOR READING.

(1) St. Mark xvi. 1, 2. They who "bought sweet spices" to anoint the body of Jesus Christ represent those who seek our Lord in good faith, with sorrow and love.

We notice in Holy Scripture that the morning is often associated with manifestations of God. So in the early morning the Church calls us to the Altar to meet our Lord.

(2) St. Mark xvi. 3–8. Ever a "great stone" in the way of our spiritual resurrection—some habit that must be moved away. God sends us the needful grace.

(3) St. John v. 1–6. Faith gains a victory over all obstacles. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

(4) St. John xx. 19–23. Our Lord's Presence brings (1) peace, (2) joy through recognition of Him, (3) pardon.

(5) St. John xx. 26–30. Our Lord makes His Presence known by showing His wounds. Suffering is often a proof of union with Jesus Christ—His "hall-mark."

(6) 2 Tim. ii. 8–14. "Remember"! The Resurrection of our Lord is the witness to His Divine and human natures. As man—He died; as God—He arose; as the God-Man He therefore has power to raise up man to union with God. "Remember"! Christianity rests upon the truth of the Resurrection.

III.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

The Evidence for the Resurrection of our Lord

Prophecy.

"The same stone which the builders refused is become the head stone in the corner. This is the Lord's doing; and it is marvellous in our eyes." (Ps. cxviii. 22, 23.)

Jesus Christ.

"A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit." (St. Matt. vii. 18; xii. 33.)

The Soul.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." (1 St. Peter i. 3.)

III.

The Evidence for the Resurrection of our Lord

ST. PAUL declares that the life of Christianity is staked upon the truth of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain."[1]

This one miracle, if it can be established, is sufficient proof of our Lord's Divine Mission. It so happens that no event in the history of the past possesses stronger historical proof. A miracle may be defined as an event for the occurrence of which no force, or combination of forces known to man, is able to account. Such an event, however, does not take place casually and without any reason, but follows immediately on the command of the person who is instrumental in the performance of the miracle. A miracle is performed for a definite purpose, and will be distinguished from any Satanic wonders by bearing the impress of the holiness and benevolence of God. It has been the custom of the Christian apologists very generally to rest the proof of the truth of our religion upon miracle. There is, however, it must be remembered, another witness to Christ, and one much more convincing, namely the moral evidences, as they are called, of Christianity. The history of Christianity itself is indeed the most convincing proof of the possibility of miracle, for it cannot be denied that Christianity is an altogether unique fact, and traces its origin to an absolutely unique character and life, through a series of events unparalleled in the history of mankind.

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[1] 1 Cor. xv. 14.

That Jesus Christ stands on an elevation which is solitary among the sons of men will hardly be denied by intelligent persons. But if He stands thus alone, His greatness must be due to some cause different from those forces which have produced other great men. A unique effect will lead us to expect a unique cause.

I.

The Christian faith centres around the Person of Jesus Christ — Christianity is nothing else than the imitation, love, service, and worship of Jesus Christ.

It is by no means like other religions—the mere acceptance of a code of morals, a doctrine apart from, and more or less independent of, the person of the founder. Christianity is the knowledge of Jesus Christ equally with the knowledge of the Father. This our Lord made clear when He taught, "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent."[1] "I am the Light of the world."[1] "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me."[2] These are words that find no parallel in the teaching of any other religious founder. They challenge proof, and that proof has been amply given in the history of the Christian Church. No really adequate non-Christian explanation of the phenomena of Christianity has been given, though countless theories have been advanced to account for its unique position. Some of these have been abandoned; others are still put forward.

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[1] St. John xvii. 3.

It is not the place in a book of devotional studies to enter into the various theories that have been maintained and abandoned. Biblical criticism has practically only confirmed the historical value of the books of the New Testament. Whether what these books relate as to Jesus Christ be true or false, the books themselves as historical documents are now generally admitted to be genuine works of the date that is claimed for them by the Church of Christ. That the character of Christ as portrayed in these books is the noblest ever presented to the world is now very usually admitted, even by those who refuse to acknowledge the Divine Nature of the Man Christ Jesus.

It is almost inconceivable that an impostor, or one who was a prey to self-deception, should occupy the place that the Christ has for eighteen centuries held in Christendom. It is equally a wild supposition to imagine that all the love and worship of the Church has during these ages been offered to a hero of fiction. If the portrait of Jesus Christ drawn in the New Testament be a merely imaginary one, and the teaching attributed to Him be in reality what certain later interested writers have attributed to Him and put into His mouth—then these fraudulent authors must for ever rank as the greatest of literary and imaginative writers. Their work may well claim to be itself an almost miraculous effort of genius. It has certainly never been equalled; and no one pretends that any human life has ever influenced men of all types and characters in the way that they have been influenced by the life of Christ; or that any other teaching has ever been what Christianity has been in the past, and is at the present moment to the most civilised and cultured peoples of the world. It is quite beyond the limits of credibility that a character so unique and a teaching so lofty should be the mere growth of legend, and the imaginary production of uncultured or fraudulent disciples. The Divine as well as the human aspect of Jesus Christ is the only clue to His position in the history of the past, and of His present hold on Christendom. His Divinity is the unique cause which alone can account for an undeniably unique effect. Other men have given lofty and inspiring teaching to the world, and if Christianity excels all other systems it is certainly not because it is merely the best of rival systems, but because it is altogether above comparison with any other doctrine ever given to men, and centres round a Personality absolutely unlike that of other teachers "sent from God."[1] In a word, Christianity is Christ, not merely the doctrine of Christ. Christ lived a poor despised Man, among a conquered people. He failed, before His crucifixion, in attracting any great number of disciples! Those whom He called to follow Him were men of no political or worldly importance whatever. They were, like their Master, without any of the qualifications that are usually associated with the foundation of an abiding influence over the world.

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[1] St. John viii. 12.

[2] St. John xiv. 6.

Jesus Christ died abandoned by all but a mere handful; and of these few who remained attached to Him, only one Apostle had the courage to watch by the Cross during the last hours of his Master's life. As men reckon failure, no man ever failed more completely than Jesus Christ seemed to have failed at the moment of His death.

And yet now, after nineteen centuries, His Name is the only human Name worshipped—not by barbarians, but by the greatest and noblest of mankind. The nations that are to the front in civilisation are the nations that acknowledge Jesus Christ as their God as well as their Example. This undeniable fact can only be explained by the acceptance of the Resurrection of Christ from the dead, and it was upon the truth of this fact that St. Paul staked the whole cause of Christianity. The world was certainly in no way prepared blindly to accept the Resurrection. The possibility of such a return from the dead was not admitted by the cultured religions of Pagan Greece and Rome. True, there were stories in the mythology of Greece that implied a sort of resurrection life, but such legends were shadowy and vague; and their influence, except as furnishing a graceful tale or a more or less sensuous entertainment, was absolutely *nil.* The resurrection of the body was denied by many of the Jews, and there existed no belief, even amongst the most orthodox, of the possibility of any anticipation for the individual of the resurrection that should take place at the last day. The most scrupulous faith could only exclaim, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day."[1]

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[1] St. John i. 6.

But our Lord's Resurrection was a fact; and it meant that the whole power of God lay hidden in the tiny Christian seed which was to be planted in the great heathen world. A force not of this world was to hide itself in the catacombs of Rome, to germinate, to draw all that could minister to its growth into its own organism, and in the end to sap the life out of Paganism and give to the world in its stead, not a theory, not a superstition, not an aspect of the truth, but the truth itself.

II.

The victory of Jesus Christ over the world began after His death.

St. Paul's Epistles are historical documents of the highest order, and they prove that within twenty-four years or so after the crucifixion of our Lord a highly superhuman character was attributed to Jesus Christ. This belief was not first suggested by St. Paul, but was evidently the common faith of all those whom he addressed. The fact of Christ's Resurrection is not debated; it is only the influence of this fact on Christian life, and its bearing on the general resurrection, that leads St. Paul to say, "*If* Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain."[1] Christianity—he would say—falls into chaos if it neglects the spiritual lessons taught by the fact of the actual Resurrection of Christ. He argues that if—as indeed is the case—Christ is living and has been raised from the dead, the whole Christian life must be touched by the influence of that fact; if Christ be not risen, then there is an end of all his teaching—of all concern with Christ, and of all faith in Christ. There is no such thing as Christianity without a belief in the actual, literal rising again of Christ from the dead.

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[1] St. John xi. 24.

The entire Church then, in less than thirty years after the crucifixion of our Lord, accepted His Resurrection as an unquestionable fact.

But those whom St. Paul addressed were in many cases converts of long standing, so that the teaching of the Resurrection of Christ was familiar to them from the date of their entrance into the Church.

St. Matthias was chosen as one of the men who had been familiar with the life of our Lord "to be a witness . . . of His Resurrection."[1] It is written of the first preaching in the Church that "with great power gave the Apostles witness of the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus."[2] It was "because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection" that St. Paul met with so great resistance from "certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks."[3] It was "when they heard of the resurrection" that "some mocked"[4]—and again St. Paul's words, "Of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question,"[5] show plainly how the Apostles insisted upon this unwelcome truth as an essential part of their message. If they could have left out the doctrine of the Resurrection, their success—humanly speaking—would have been less difficult.

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[1] 1 Cor. xv. 14.

No one now seriously maintains that the belief in the Resurrection originated in a fraud. Two alternatives remain, viz. that the Resurrection really took place, or that the Apostles' belief in the reality of the Resurrection was the result of some kind of mental hallucination. Modern unbelievers very generally accept this latter theory—"the theory of visions," as it is called. The Church has always explained the marvellous growth of Christianity, and its success where all other religions have failed, as the effect of a Divine energy given to the Church by a Divine Person

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[1] Acts i. 22.
[2] Acts v. 33.
[3] Acts xvii. 18.
[4] Acts xvii. 32.
[5] Acts xxiii. 6.

—the Incarnate Word. According to her witness, Jesus Christ arose from the dead, instructed His Apostles in things pertaining to His future Church, gave them supernatural powers, and sent them out on the day of Pentecost endued with the might of God the Holy Ghost to convert the world. The Apostles obeyed our Lord; the Church increased in an extraordinary way in spite of all human opposition, and during nineteen centuries has been the great regenerator of mankind—the light of the world.

Unbelievers in Christianity account for the Christian Church in quite another way. Christ never rose from the dead; His body turned to corruption; but His enthusiastic disciples fancied that they saw Him alive. Some excitable women first of all spread the tale of His Resurrection; the Apostles, ever ready of belief, then imagined that they themselves had interviews with Jesus Christ, and were told by Him to found a Church. As, however, the visions ceased, they supposed He had ascended into heaven, and even thought that angels appeared and confirmed their belief. On all these delusions they were able to build up the Christian Church — the greatest and most wonderful of all institutions. This Church, founded on delusion, has outlived all the monarchies of the world, and has held before the human race the highest standard of life ever imagined. Falsehood has indeed, according to this theory, regenerated the world, and made men love truth! Beelzebub has been the great Exorcist!

Does not this account of cause and effect suppose a miracle as great as the miracle of the Resurrection itself?

We have, however, for the refutation of "the theory of visions," not only the inherent impossibility of the regeneration of mankind through hallucination, but also the fact that there was lacking that expectancy of a return of Christ from the dead—that "fixed idea" which is one of the three mental conditions required to enable even the most credulous to see visions and mistake them for realities. Moreover, in visions, the "fixed idea" leads to the sight of that which is expected. But in the appearance of our Lord to the women and to the Apostles there is this strange fact prominently brought out—that they did not at once recognise the Lord. Now no "idea" of a resurrection body that was not an exact restoration of the form that had been familiar was prevalent in the Jewish world. If excited fancy had imagined a resurrection of Christ, it would certainly have imagined Christ to have appeared exactly as He had been before His Passion. The fact of His appearance being unlike what the disciples might have expected, and yet bringing conviction to all that it was the Lord indeed Whom they beheld, is a strong proof that the appearances were real, and not hallucinations. The doctrine of the resurrection of the body involving change, so that what is sown in weakness is raised in power—the doctrine that in the resurrection the body is no longer exactly what it was before death, but a "spiritual body"[1]—so far from being a fixed idea leading to visions, was not known even to the most devout before the Resurrection of Christ, and the preaching of St. Paul.

The other theories to account for a belief in our Lord's Resurrection are not now often put forward.

1. The theory that Jesus did not really die, but merely swooned, contradicts not only the Gospel story of the piercing of His side, but leads to many insuperable difficulties. How is it that the women and the disciples failed to recognise Jesus Christ? How came it that our Lord could leave the sepulchre which was guarded by a "watch" of the Roman guard? How did He regain strength after such a deathlike swoon and all the exhaustion of the crucifixion? What became of Jesus Christ during the rest of His life? How is it that we have not a trace of His existence among men, after the time when He is reported by the Evangelists to have ascended into heaven? How can we account for His disciples deserting Him and inventing the Gospel story, which our Lord must either have connived at or rejected? If He connived at the myth of His Resurrection and Ascension, what becomes of the consistency of His character, and how can we reconcile it with the lofty teaching attributed to Him? If He did not connive at the deception, would He not have shown Himself to the world, and hindered the people from accepting

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[1] 1 Cor. xv. 44.

the falsehoods put forth by the Apostles? Again, what motive would the Apostles have had for inventing a fraud that caused for them a lifelong persecution and a martyr's death?

These and other difficulties lie on the surface of the theory that our Lord did not really die, but temporarily swooned and then recovered.

2. The theory that the Apostles stole away the body of Jesus is also full of impossible difficulties. It is, however, the story that we are told the Jews put forward; "They gave money unto the soldiers, saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole Him away while we slept."[1]

The watch had been placed to hinder the possible theft of the Lord's body. Can it be conceived that the timid disciples should, in spite of "the watch," roll away the stone, and remove the body in the leisurely way suggested by the careful arrangement of the linen swathing shroud and napkin as described by the Evangelist in the account of the visit of St. Peter and St. John to the sepulchre after the Resurrection?[2] Is it likely that no confession of the fraud would ever be made by any of the persons concerned in it? Is it conceivable that for a conscious fraud of this kind all the Apostles would brave persecution and death, when its exposure would have not only eased their conscience, but have brought them reward and honour? Could

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[1] St. Matt. xxviii. 13.

[2] St. John xx. 6, 7.

St. Peter have written his Epistle knowing that his whole life and all his teaching was a lie?

We may then dismiss all these theories as quite inadequate to account for the facts that are known to us through history. The theory of visions is the only one that is in the present day put forward by any writer worthy of notice, and this theory will not, as we have seen, stand the test of careful examination.[1]

It has of course been objected that no reliance can be placed on the accuracy of the accounts given in the Gospels—that they are manufactured tales. Sir James FitzStephens—among others—ably defended this position some years ago in the *Contemporary Review.*[2] He writes: "I once listened to a sermon from a dignitary of the Church of England, in which he said he should argue the probabilities of the Resurrection in a 'hard, dry, cold, legal spirit,' and he proceeded to compare the probabilities of what he called the Apostles' account (the angel descended, and rolled back the stone), and the chief priests' account (his disciples stole him away while we slept). The preacher urged with much warmth that it was a moral impossibility that the Roman soldiers should sleep on guard, and the disciples, awed as they were, should commit such a useless and audacious imposture. He totally forgets that what he called the chief priests' account, is not what the chief priests said, but what the author of St. Matthew's Gospel says they said, which is a very different matter. Nothing could be more curious or important than to hear the chief priests' account of the matter, and to be able to confront the centurion and his soldiers, who are said to have been on guard that night, with the author of St. Matthew's Gospel, or his informer . . ."

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[1] For a detailed statement of the evidence for the Resurrection see *The Resurrection of our Lord*, Prof. MILLIGAN.

[2] March, 1874.

That no account of what chief priests or others who were hostile to Christ said about His reported Resurrection has come down to us is, perhaps, a proof that they had no other account to give. If they could have produced the dead body of Christ they would have done so, and history would have almost certainly recorded the fact. But although the Christian belief was subject to Jewish and Pagan inquiry and persecution, nothing that could lessen the credibility of the Gospel story appears to have been put forward. Josephus, Tacitus, Pliny and others, would hardly have failed to leave some record of the exposure of an imposture that had, even in their time, attracted a vast multitude of adherents. The Christian apologists of the second and following centuries would surely have left some attempted refutation of any accusations of fraud, had such been brought by the Jews against the Apostles. Moreover, there ever remain "the fruits" of the Gospel story—the influence of Christianity upon the world during the past centuries. That the world owes all that is best and noblest to a religion rooted and grounded on imposture or hallucinations is absurd.

Indeed, it may safely be affirmed that no explanation, except that given by the Church of God, is in the least capable of accounting for the growth and influence of the Christian Faith in the world. "The stone which the builders rejected *is* become"—whether we like it or no—"the head-stone of the corner." All we can say is, "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."[1] The great tree that shelters the whole civilised world has sprung from the tomb of Christ, or rather from the life-force of Him Who is the Resurrection and the Life. Many attempts have been made to found religions, many have been founded, some still exist that outnumber Christianity in their adherents; but one Faith alone is Catholic—universal; one alone is Holy—and that one is Apostolic, Christian.

III.

The Resurrection of our Lord brings with it certain consequences. The first truth that follows from the Resurrection is that our Lord is God; it was promised by Him as a proof of His Divine Sonship.

On a certain day Jesus Christ entered the Temple, and found therein those who bought and sold in the sacred precincts. Filled with zeal for the house of God, our Lord drove the buyers and sellers from the Temple. The prophet Isaiah had called the house of God a house of prayer. Our Lord claims to be the Son of God with these words: "Take these things hence;

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[1] Ps. cxviii. 23.

make not My Father's house an house of merchandise."[1] Questioned as to His authority for acting in this way, our Lord foretold His Resurrection as the sign they demanded: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up";[2] we are told, "He spake of the temple of His body." The Resurrection of our Lord is therefore the ratification by God of the claims of Jesus Christ to be His only begotten Son. This the Jews must have, to some extent, understood. They cried out in the judgment hall: "He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God."[3] During the crucifixion "they that passed by reviled Him, wagging their heads, and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save Thyself. If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking Him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others, Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him; for He said, I am the Son of God."[4] We are told also that "when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God."[5] We can hardly doubt that this conviction would be enormously strengthened when the fact of

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[1] St. John ii. 16. [2] St. John ii. 19. [3] St. John xix. 7.
[4] St. Matt. xxvii. 39-43. [5] St. Matt. xxvii. 54.

Christ's Resurrection was proclaimed on the day of Pentecost to the world assembled at Jerusalem. "This Jesus," Whom they had themselves crucified, "hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses."[1] With this preaching of the Resurrection came conviction; "they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we *do?*"[2] We remember St. Peter's answer, "Repent, and be baptised every one of you."

There can be little doubt that no plausible proof of imposture or hallucination was produced by the enemies of Jesus Christ to overthrow the bold preaching of the Resurrection by the Apostles. This fact must have called to mind the wonders of the life, and the marvels of the Passion of Jesus Christ, and disposed those who were really "men of goodwill" towards the acceptance of the teaching of the Apostles. It was the Resurrection that explained and confirmed everything. St. Paul writes that Jesus Christ was made of "the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."[3] The result, however, upon those who believed in the Resurrection must be far-reaching. It would involve the acceptance of *all* that Jesus had begun "to do and to teach." If He is "the Son of God," there could be no doubt as to whatever He had taught being the truth, and He had taught much that was far from agreeable

[1] Acts ii. 32. [2] Acts ii. 37. [3] Rom. i. 3, 4.

to the natural heart of man. Hence the practical nature of the question put to the Apostles by those three thousand who believed, "What shall we *do?*"

In this confirmation by a Divine sign of the truth of our Lord's teaching in one point—His Divinity—we have the certainty of His truth in every doctrine. All that He has threatened or promised has, or will, come to pass: "My word shall not pass away." Thus the Resurrection became the corner-stone of the Christian faith, for it was the Divinely given proof of His Divinity, as the Passion was the witness of His true Humanity. There is no Christianity without it. The Corinthians who denied "a resurrection of the dead" wished to confine themselves to discussing a presumed physical impossibility of anything of the sort. St. Paul cuts them short by saying, "If you mean what you say, you mean that Christ Himself never really rose." If any of the Corinthians were prepared to accept this consequence, they probably did not see why they could not deny even the Resurrection of Christ, and yet somehow continue to be Christians. They did not wish in terms to give up Christianity. They may have flattered themselves that they still retained a firm hold upon all that was really essential in it; that they had only given up legendary additions to the simple story of the life of Christ; additions which their Greek science had pronounced impossible. They were still willing to believe in a Christ Who displayed before the eyes of men a perfect example; Who did many works of wonder and of love; Who taught a heavenly doctrine; Who died a cruel and shameful death. But the assertion that, being dead and buried, "He rose again the third day, according to the scriptures," was, they thought, a superstitious, although an apostolical, addition to the simple truth. It was no part of the fragment of Christianity which approved itself to their order of intelligence as being really fundamental, and they dismissed it as unimportant, if not untrue.

It is to these persons that St. Paul says solemnly, "'If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.'[1] St. Paul will not allow that this faith in a Christ Who has not risen from His grave is any Christianity at all. According to him, if it is a religion at all, it is another religion; it has nothing really to do with the Faith preached by the Apostles. These Corinthians might still talk about our Lord Jesus Christ. They might still claim the honours and the risks of the Christian Name. They might even imagine that they only differed from the Apostles in being more clear-sighted and better informed, without being less tender-hearted and devout. But St. Paul will allow nothing of the kind. Do not let them deceive themselves in a matter of such momentous import. To deny or ignore Christ's Resurrection is to abandon Christianity. It is to give up the very core and heart of the Faith. The beliefs that remain may have an interest of their own; but it is the sort of interest which belongs to a corpse. It may remind us of the past. But it has no longer any place in the land of the living."[1]

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[1] 1 Cor. xv. 14.

Another consequence of the Resurrection was that its proclamation became in a certain sense a test of character. Men could not seriously listen to the preaching of the Resurrection, and be afterwards as they had been before. Our Lord was, at His Presentation in the Temple as a Child, spoken of as being "set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel."[2] He was to be "a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence"[3] to some, while to others the same Christ became "the power of God, and the wisdom of God."[4] Some believed, others doubted; some mocked, and others feared, but postponed any decision. How do we account for this? Why was it, if the evidence for the Resurrection is so strong, that it was not accepted by all at the time, and that it is now rejected by a great number of learned men? We may find an answer given very clearly to this question by Dr. Liddon in his sermon, *Grounds of Faith in the Resurrection.* "The answer to this natural and legitimate question is of practical importance to all of us. There can, I apprehend, be no sort of doubt that if an ordinary historical occurrence, such as the death of Julius Cæsar, were attested as clearly as the Resurrection of our Lord—not more clearly nor less—as having taken place nineteen centuries ago, all the world would believe it as a matter of course. Nay, more, if an extraordinary occurrence, traversing the usual operations of God in nature, were similarly attested, it would be easily believed, if only it stood alone, as an isolated wonder, connected with no religious claim, implying no religious duties, appealing only to the understanding, and having no bearing, however remote, upon the will.

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[1] LIDDON, *Easter Sermons*, iii.

[2] St. Luke ii. 34.

[3] 1 St. Peter ii. 8.

[4] 1 Cor. i. 24.

The reason why the Resurrection was not always believed upon the evidence of those who witnessed to it is, because to believe it means, for a consistent and thoughtful man, to believe in and to accept a great deal else. To believe the Resurrection is to believe, implicitly, in the Christian Faith. The Divine Person of our Lord, the atoning work of our Lord, the teaching authority of our Lord, the efficacy of His intercession in heaven, and of the great means of grace which He has given us on earth, depend on and are bound up with His Resurrection. It is no mere speculative question, whether Jesus Christ did or did not rise from the dead; it is an eminently practical one. The intellect is not more interested in it than the will; perhaps it is even less interested. If the intellect alone could have the decision of the question in its keeping, the number of unbelievers would be comparatively small. The real difficulties of belief lie, generally speaking, with the will. And nothing is more certain, I may add more alarming, than the power of the will to shape, check, promote, control conviction. The will, too, has a reasoning power of its own; the will is, in a sense, another reason within us. It looks ahead; it watches the proceedings of the understanding with a jealous scrutiny; it watches, and, if need be, it interferes. It sees the understanding on the point of embracing a conviction, which means much more than speculative assent; which means action or suffering, that is to say, something entirely within its own province, the province of the will. It sees the conviction all but accepted; it sees the understanding stretching out its arms to welcome the advancing truth; and it mutters to itself, 'This must not be, or I shall be compromised. I shall have to do or to endure what I do not like.' And such is the power of the will that it can give effect to this decision. It can baulk and thwart the action of the intellect; give it a perverse twist, and even set it scheming how best to discredit or refute the truth which but now it was on the point of accepting. This is what happened to the Jews of the Pentecostal period. They had no prejudice against miracles. On the contrary, they expected miracles to occur from time to time. They entirely believed in astonishing miracles in their own past history, although many of these miracles rested upon evidence far less cogent than the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Had it been for them only a speculative question, they would have believed in this too; but so far from being a speculative question only, it was charged with practical consequences. The will of the Jew instinctively suggested to him: 'If Jesus of Nazareth rose from His grave, then a great deal else follows for which I am not prepared: then He is the Messiah, and the present order of things will be seriously changed; and new duties, new sacrifices, will be expected of me and mine. I must inquire if His Resurrection be so very certain; if there be not a natural explanation of it; if it be not due to a trick, or to an hallucination. Anyhow, it must not, it cannot, be accepted as true. It may triumph at the bar of probable evidence. But common sense, as I understand common sense, is against it.'

This, or something like this, is what the Jew would have thought to himself. And his will would have carried the day against his understanding. And thus we may understand what it is that the Spirit does to produce faith. He does not set aside or extinguish the operations of the natural reason; reason too is a guide to truth which God has given us. But He does change the temper, or the direction of the will. And thus He sets the reason free to do justice to the evidence before it. It is thus that, within us, the Spirit beareth witness. The evidence for the Resurrection is of such a character that an unspiritual man, with no more than average powers, who understands the value of a probable as distinct from a mathematical argument, can see its strength and force. But this perception is useless, unless the will be ready to do its part, or at least not to interfere with the verdict of the intellect. And it is the Spirit Who secures this: He—

'Bends the stubborn heart and will,
Melts the frozen, warms the chill,
Guides the steps that go astray.'

The evidence for the Resurrection was not stronger on the Day of Pentecost than it was on the day before. But the Descent of the Spirit made it morally possible for three thousand converts to do that evidence something like justice.

And now we can see why St. Paul makes so much of faith—especially in a Risen Christ—in his great epistles. Faith is not merely the assent of the understanding; it is also the assent of the will. It is even less an intellectual than a moral act. And thus it is a test and criterion not only or chiefly of the worth of a man's headpiece, but, pre-eminently, of the rectitude of his dispositions, of the goodness of his heart. This is one reason why it justifies; in an act of faith the whole moral nature concurs in the justifying assent to revealed truth. If the understanding were alone concerned, there would be no more reason for our being justified by faith in a Crucified and Risen Christ than for our being justified by our assent to the conclusion of a problem in Euclid. It is because the will must indorse the verdict of the understanding, and so must mean obedience as well as assent, that 'by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.'[1]

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[1] Eph. ii. 8.

. . . Let us endeavour to remember this. Pray for that Divine Spirit Who witnesses to the Resurrection, as in the sacred books of Scripture, so by His action upon the hearts and wills of men. Remember that as 'no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost,'[1] so no man can profess to any purpose faith in Christ's Resurrection but by the Holy Ghost. It is the Spirit that beareth witness, now as nineteen centuries ago, by that influence on the will of man, which leaves the intellect at liberty to do justice to the evidence before it. Pray that most Blessed Spirit so to touch your heart and will that you may have no reason for wishing the Resurrection to be untrue. Pray for this His gracious assistance; that you may recover or strengthen the great grace of faith, and have your part in that apostolical promise—'If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.'"[2]

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[1] 1 Cor. xii. 3.

[2] Rom. x. 9; LIDDON, *Easter Sermons*, v. iii.

PASSAGES FOR READING.

(1) Acts iv. 5–13. *Si monumentum requiris, circumspice*—"If you seek his monument, look around." This is the epitaph of Sir Christopher Wren, the architect of St. Paul's Cathedral. If you seek a monument to the truth of the Divinity of Jesus Christ, look at the work He has done in establishing Christianity.

(2) 1 Cor. xv. 1–9. The Resurrection of Christ is, as much as His Death, a part of the Gospel.

(3) 1 Cor. xv. 12–20. The Resurrection of our Lord is a pledge of our own.

(4) 1 Cor. xv. 22–26. God made not death, for God is Life, and when God is "all in all" death shall be no more.

(5) 1 Cor. xv. 35–41. Death is now, in the natural order, a condition of life and progress. So, spiritually, we must die to sin if we would live to God. "Men may rise on stepping-stones of their dead selves to higher things."

(6) 1 Cor. xv. 42–end. The resurrection body is a spiritual body, and therefore one we cannot picture in our imagination, but "if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." (1 Thess. iv. 14.)

IV.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

Newness of Life

Prophecy

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them." (Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.)

Jesus Christ

"Behold, I make all things new." (Rev. xxi. 5.)

The Soul

"We are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." (Rom. vi. 4.)

IV.

Newness of Life

TO each of us is given two lives, the natural and the spiritual. Our natural life we receive when we are born into the world. By this life we inherit the nature of the first Adam and its outward sign, "the body of our humiliation," "of the earth, earthy," tending through life to decay and death. By our spiritual life we are incorporated into Christ, as the branch is grafted into the vine; we partake of His new life; the corrupt nature of the first Adam is subdued and mortified; the new man created after holiness in Christ Jesus is put on. This nature is from heaven, heavenly, tending towards God and eternal life, and preparing also for the new body of the resurrection; "for our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself."[1]

Between these two natures—the forces of death and of life—there is a continual warfare.

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[1] Phil. iii. 20, 21 (R.V.).

Their desires are different—"the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other."[1] Their hopes are different—the one seeking for the "things of the flesh," the other for the "things of the spirit";[2] the one glorying in its shame, the other longing to be "delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God."[3] Of these two natures Isaac and Ishmael were types in the Old Testament.

St. Paul writes: "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman."[4]

This warfare between the flesh and the spirit is never wholly ended in this life—a fact that accounts for the different ways in which Holy Scripture speaks of the spiritual life in relation to sin. From some passages it would seem as though the new life involved sinlessness, since we are "dead" and "buried" "with Christ";[5] while on the other hand it is quite clear, from very much of the teaching of the New Testament, that "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."[6] The warfare is therefore a lifelong struggle, varying in intensity, but never wholly ceasing. For this reason the newly baptised is pledged to fight manfully "unto his life's end," as a faithful soldier of Jesus Christ.

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[1] Gal. v. 17.

[2] Rom. viii. 5.

[3] Rom. viii. 21.

[4] Gal. iv. 28–30.

[5] Rom. vi. 4, 8.

[6] 1 St. John i. 8.

I.

The Christian life is a resurrection in the sense that as the old nature dies the new life of Christ has fuller play, and tends to become more and more *our* life. Hence when the Apostle urges that because Christ is risen "we also should walk in newness of life" "as those that are alive from the dead,"[1] he has in view a death and a life, each of which "baptism doth represent unto us." If we look at baptism merely in one aspect or the other, as representing only life or only death, we shall not really apprehend the teaching of Holy Scripture as to the new life springing from death to which the regenerate are called.

The Baptismal Office declares—"Baptism doth represent unto us our profession; which is, to follow the example of our Saviour Christ, and to be made like unto Him; that, as He died, and rose again for us, so should we, who are baptised, (*a*) die from sin . . . continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections, and (*b*) rise again unto righteousness . . . daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living."

Baptism is then the type of "death unto sin" rather than the actual death itself; it imparts the new life as a free gift or grace of God, in order that we may have the opportunity of walking in the way of God's commandments. Thus, although we are "buried with Him by baptism,"[1] and might therefore be thought incapable of sin, since "he that is dead is freed from sin,"[2] yet the Church speaks also of this burial as a future effect, and prays that "the old Adam in him may be buried"—"that all carnal affections may die in him"—that "being buried with Christ in His death, he may crucify the old man, and utterly abolish the whole body of sin; and that, as he is made partaker of the death" of Christ "he may also be partaker of His resurrection"—"that the new man may be raised up in him," and "that all things belonging to the Spirit may live and grow in him."

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[1] Rom. vi. 13.

The primitive form of administering baptism was by immersion; this immersion typified death and burial, while the rising from the waters figured the new, risen life into which the baptised had entered. In our own rubric baptism by immersion is contemplated. "The Priest shall take the child . . . and . . . (if they shall certify him that the child may well endure it) he shall dip it in the water discreetly and warily. . . . But if they certify that the child is weak, it shall suffice to pour water upon it. . . ."

Easter has always been associated with the thought of baptism, and in the Collect for Easter Even the sense of St. Paul's teaching is expressed. "Grant, O Lord, that as we are baptised into the death of Thy Blessed Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, so by continual

[1] Rom. vi. 4.

[2] Rom. vi. 7.

mortifying our corrupt affections we may be buried with Him; and that through the grave, and gate of death, we may pass to our joyful resurrection."

Baptism is thus associated with the Resurrection, because it is into union with the risen Christ that we are admitted. In this way the outward fact of His Resurrection, its historical actuality, becomes the symbol of an inward force or power communicated to the soul in baptism. St. Paul prayed, "That I may know Him, and the *power* of His resurrection."[1] Our Lord had Himself promised that this Divine life should be ours by union with Him. He is the Vine, and all the life of the branches flows from their union one with another in the parent stem—"Because I live, ye shall live also";[2] the Apostle writes of those who by nature were dead in sin, as by grace quickened with Christ's own life—"You being dead . . . hath He quickened together with Him":[3] and St. Peter does not shrink from saying that we are called to be "partakers of the Divine nature."[4] We have then at the outset to understand that, if we are called to follow Christ in His Resurrection life, it is because we are made members of Christ—members, that is, of His risen, glorified Humanity. We are not called to imitate as from outside the life of One with Whom we have no fellowship, but we are called to live the life that is *in* us through union with Christ. This is

[1] Phil. iii. 10.

[2] St. John xiv. 19.

[3] Col. ii. 13.

[4] 2 St. Peter i. 4.

the great doctrine of "the power of His resurrection." Our "life is hid with Christ in God."[1] We dwell in Him and He dwells in us. There is one life flowing through the one Body, springing through the one Baptism from the one Lord.

This then is our vocation—to abide in the vine—and if we "walk worthy of" our "vocation"[2] how should not our life resemble His life?

The tree is one; the vine is one; the fruit will also be of one kind—"unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."[3] The two figures given in Holy Scripture of this life of union with Christ, are both suggestive of the truth that His life and our life are meant to be one and the same. The vine with its branches is the figure chosen by our Lord Himself.[4] The other figure, suggested by St. Paul, is that of the body,[5] in which the life-blood is sent, by means of channels, from the centre to the extremities. Each part of the body lives by union with the head; cut off from this union the member dies and goes to corruption. It is then because this life is begun by baptism that we are called to continue in it, to "walk in" this "newness of life," to "abide in the vine." In this sense we are "dead to sin," and "buried," and "risen," with Christ, inasmuch as we cannot be spiritually dead and spiritually alive at one and the same time. We *are* risen with Christ so long as His life is in us—so long as we

[1] Col. iii. 3.
[2] Eph. iv. 1.
[3] Rom. vi. 22.
[4] St. John xv. 1–8.
[5] Eph. i. 22, 23; iv. 15, 16; Col. i. 18, etc

are united with Him. But as we are not yet beyond the influence of temptation there is always the need to watch lest our life be lost by deadly sin. The branch may be separated from the vine, the limb may be cut off from the body. There are commonly reckoned to be seven deadly sins, any one of which, fully accepted by the will, may be a "sin unto death."[1] How needful then are the warnings of Holy Scripture and of the Church to "watch"—to aim at "continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections," so that the life of Christ may "live and grow" in us.

"What," asks Dr. Liddon, "is that common point between Christ's Resurrection on the one hand, and the newness of a Christian life on the other, which St. Paul probably has in his thoughts and which serves to explain his language? The answer is, that the source, the motive power of the two things, of Christ's Resurrection, and of Christ's new life, is one and the same. They are equally effects of one Divine agency." St. Paul writes that, "like as," or "even as Christ was raised up from the dead *by the glory of the Father*, even so we also should walk in newness of life."[2] St. Thomas teaches in his *Summa* that death did not separate either the soul or the body of Christ from the Divine Nature, so that His body and soul in death could be looked at in two ways—either in relation to the Divinity, or as creatures created by God. Through the union with the

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[1] 1 St. John v. 16.

[2] Rom. vi. 4.

Divinity the body may be said to have taken to itself the soul in the Resurrection, or the soul may be said to have taken again the body: thus Christ arose by His own power, as He said, "I lay down My life, that I may take it again. . . . I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again."[1] If, on the other hand, we think of the body and soul as creatures of God, then the Resurrection is fitly attributed to the Father.

The Divine Nature belongs equally to the Father and the Son, so that when it is said that "Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father," we are taught that it was by the Divinity that the rising again was brought about.

In our own spiritual life we have then also a work of the Divine power, in other words—the Christian life and the Resurrection life "are equally effects of one Divine agency."

The Divine force, or power, or energy, reaches us through Christ. The created becomes the *medium* of the uncreated. Here we have the idea of the Sacramental system, which is often called "an extension of the Incarnation," because it bestows the grace of God, the life of God even, through created channels. The Sacraments are the channels of the new life, and baptism is especially connected with the Resurrection, because it is by baptism that the new life is bestowed on the soul; in other words it is the sacrament of regeneration, or new birth. The resurrection life is therefore our own, if we are in union with Christ; or, in other words, if we are free from mortal sin. We have then to live and "walk in newness of life."

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[1] St. John x. 17, 18.

The spiritual life is effected by the Holy Ghost. In the Nicene Creed we say that the Son of God "came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made Man." At Pentecost the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles and disciples, who with Mary awaited His coming, and made them to be the mystical Body of Christ. The same Divine Spirit enters into every member of the mystical Body, when it is regenerate, to form Christ in the soul, so that Christ dwells in His elect. "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."[1] Where Christ is living He will manifest His life in the fruits of good works. Such works are "good" because they are God's as well as our own; "for it is God," says St. Paul, "which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."[2] "All things belonging to the Spirit" live and grow in the children of Christ's Resurrection. The life of the vine manifests its vitality in manifold fair fruits; "Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."[3] "By their fruits ye shall know them."[4]

Have we the signs of this new life in ourselves? Are we loving, gentle, etc.? If so, let us not rest content, but strive after perfection and more abundant fruitfulness.

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[1] Gal. ii. 20.

[2] Phil. ii. 13.

[3] Gal. v. 22, 23.

[4] St. Matt. vii. 20.

"Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples."[1]

"The first lesson which the risen Christ teaches the Christian is reality—genuineness. Try to feel more deeply than you talk; try to act as you feel in your best and highest moments. Do not in your new life dally with old thoughts, old associations, old and known sources of danger—the grave-clothes which are left in the tomb of sin, the bandages which fetter the liberty of a risen life. For 'Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the Feast, not with the old leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.'"[2]

Now although our Lord, during the great Forty Days, was always with His disciples by His grace and by His invisible power, He yet "showed Himself alive" to them from time to time to console, to instruct, and to enlighten them. We are told, "He showed Himself alive after His Passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God."[3] What these "infallible proofs" were we learn from the Gospel story. Sometimes our Lord drew near and convinced those who doubted of the reality of His Resurrection, and the identity of His body with that which was crucified, by showing His wounds, and allowing the Apostles to touch them. "Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into

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[1] St. John xv. 8.

[2] Dr. LIDDON, *Easter Sermons*, xx.

[3] Acts i. 3.

My side; and be not faithless, but believing."[1] At other times our Lord drew near to the disciples working miracles—appearing in their midst when the doors were closed, causing the miraculous draught of fishes—thus proving that He had "all power" "in heaven and in earth,"[2] so that their faith in Him might be complete. Yet once more, after the Resurrection He ate and drank with them, to witness to the fact that His appearances were not merely visions, or the coming of a phantom, but that He had all the essentials of our humanity. "A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have."[3]

Now these appearances are mystically repeated to the soul with whom our Lord is invisibly united by His new life of grace. To these He sometimes appears, that is, visits them almost visibly, almost sensibly, so that the life of imitation becomes easy for the time. He appears interiorly to His servants, "giving them some signs and testimonies of His presence, with very special inspirations and affections of love, with sweetness and sensible devotion which is the refection of the spirit, with very wonderful changes that He works within their hearts, and with the illustration and understanding of the verities of Holy Scripture which He imparts to them. With these arguments He 'shows Himself alive' to those who know that He Who is within them is the living God, and Who, as He lives, works in them those works of life." Also when they communicate He is "known of them in breaking of Bread," "for He communicates unto them some light, or love, or desires, and purposes of a new life, sorrow for sins, and burning affections of devotion; whereby they understand that He Whom they have received is not bread alone,"[1] is not dead, but the living Christ.

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[1] St. John xx. 27. [2] St. Matt. xxviii. 18. [3] St. Luke xxiv. 39.

Now just as the life of Christ in us is necessarily shown by the fruits it produces, so these special visits or manifestations of Christ to the Apostles will have a special meaning in our spiritual life, and bear a special fruit. The appearances themselves represent the more evident consolations that our Lord from time to time bestows upon those who keep the door of their hearts closed against the attacks of spiritual foes. "When the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you."[2]

The first fruit, then, of the presence of Jesus in the midst of the Apostles was peace. It was customary among the Jews to exchange greetings by wishing "Peace" to each other. But in our Lord's mouth these words, "Peace be unto you," are no empty formula. We cannot doubt that the words were spoken with Divine authority, and possessed a marvellous power in calming the disturbed minds of the Apostles, removing their doubts, and conveying to them a sense of pardon for their desertion of our Lord in His Passion. The voice of Jesus calms the troubled waters, and allays all fears—"Peace be unto you."

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[1] De Ponte's *Meditations*, vol. v. p. 135.

[2] St. John xx. 19.

Such is also the effect of the presence of our Lord when "two or three are gathered together"[1] in His Name; He is there "in the midst of them" and His presence brings peace. Not immunity from future care, worry, and suffering, but calm assured peace from the realisation of the fact of His presence—"I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."[2] The soul in which *He* dwells cannot while He is there suffer shipwreck. The waves may rage, and the tempests beat, but within is "the peace of God,"[3] which the world did not give, and cannot take away.

After bestowing this "Peace," our Lord shows them His wounds. These witness to the Person Whose presence is there, and also to the fact that peace of soul does not mean mere tranquillity, but the cross.

So to St. Paul—our Lord revealed His presence, and then He said, "I will show him how great things he must suffer for My Name's sake."[4]

Our peace, then, will not lead us to be scandalised at the cross, or at the need of suffering in our spiritual life. We shall understand that "if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection."[5] Our death is a continual mortifying of a corrupt nature, a "bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus"[6]—so

[1] St. Matt. xviii. 20.
[2] St. Matt. xxviii. 20.
[3] Phil. iv. 7.
[4] Acts ix. 16.
[5] Rom. vi. 5.
[6] 2 Cor. iv. 10.

that the marks of the cross will always be the proofs of our risen life—"No cross, no crown"—no resurrection except for those who "die daily."[1]

But "who is sufficient for these things?"[2] Truly not in ourselves have we confidence to die this death unto sin. "We have no power of ourselves to help ourselves."[3] The Apostles, desiring at once to triumph in the restored temporal kingdom of Israel, were told by our Lord to obey, and then all should be made plain. "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power. · But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."[4] "Ye shall receive power." We cannot understand the designs of God, but we can obey; and we shall receive power to endure all that may be awaiting us in the future. The power is imparted by the Holy Ghost; we have to pray "with Mary the Mother of Jesus, and with His brethren" in the Church for this mighty power of God—for peace is the gift of Jesus Christ and the fruit of the Spirit. So when our Lord had spoken "Peace" to His disciples—when He had shown them His wounds—"He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost."[5] He gave them power to do that to which He called them.

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[1] 1 Cor. xv. 31.

[2] 2 Cor. ii. 16.

[3] Collect for Second Sunday in Lent.

[4] Acts i. 7, 8.

[5] St. John xx. 22.

His Presence! "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." (Exod. xxxiii. 14.) "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

His Peace! "My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you."[1]

His Cross! "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."[2] As if to connect the peace of God with the wounds of Christ, St. Paul writes of our Lord as "having made peace through the blood of His cross."[3]

His Power! "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."[4] And this power is so strong that it supplies all the defects of our weaknesses, and enables us to do all things through Christ Who strengthens us. "My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness."[5]

Can we say with St. Paul, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong"?[6] St. Paul knew how the peace of God may grow as earthly tranquillity departs.

Let us then not forget that the "newness of life" to which we are called comes from "the New Man"[7] with Whom we have union. Having His presence, we shall surely grow in His peace, the knowledge of His cross, and the greatness of His power. Let our prayer be with St. Paul: "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection."

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[1] St. John xiv. 27.

[2] St. Matt. xvi. 24.

[3] Col. i. 20.

[4] Acts i. 8.

[5] 2 Cor. xii. 9.

[6] 2 Cor. xii. 10.

[7] Eph. iv. 24.

PASSAGES FOR READING.

(1) 1 St. Peter ii. 11, 12. In the Epistle for this Sunday St. Peter teaches us some marks of the life of those who are risen with Christ. (See Romans vii. 18–25.)

(2) 1 St. Peter ii. 13–18. Obedience to all lawful authority is a duty of the risen life.

(3) St. John iii. 3–8. The new life has its origin in the Sacrament of Regeneration.

(4) 1 St. John ii. 13, 14. The new life has its youth in victory over sin.

(5) Eph. iv. 13–17. The new life has its maturity in conformity to Jesus Christ the Ideal.

(6) 1 St. John iii. 22–24. The new life is able by prayer to obtain from God all it needs.

The characteristic of this life is love. (See c. iv. 7, 8, 16.)

V.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

Two Appearances of the Risen Lord

Prophecy

"Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I, even I, will both search My sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out My sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. . . . I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick." (Ezek. xxxiv. 11, 12, 16.)

Jesus Christ

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me." (St. John x. 27.)

The Soul

"He restoreth my soul, He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His Name's sake." (Ps. xxiii. 3.)

V.

Two Appearances of the Risen Lord

IN reading the story of our Lord's Resurrection we can hardly fail to notice the simplicity with which the great miracle is recorded by the Evangelists. There is no attempt to draw a picture such as would naturally have suggested itself to a writer of fiction. If the Gospel story had been a fabrication of impostors and not a true record of facts, we should quickly have found ourselves in the atmosphere of the Apocryphal Gospels—surrounded by showy miracles lacking in motive, unless indeed they were considered to be justified by the confusion of our Lord's enemies, and the display of His power. We should have read of a resurrection from the dead in the presence of a multitude at least as numerous as that which witnessed the Crucifixion. The ignominy of the Passion had been gazed upon by crowds—so, it might have seemed, should the Resurrection be witnessed by a like number. The Passion was ordained for our sins, so also the rising again was "for our justification."[1] The one and the other, it might be argued, should be alike open to all to behold. Nothing of the sort, however, actually happened. "Him God raised up the third day, and showed Him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God."[1]

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[1] Rom. iv. 25.

And yet there are, as we can now see, reasons why our Lord only showed Himself to chosen witnesses. The "body of His humiliation" was passible, and belonged to this present life. It belonged to the natural order and was seen by all men naturally, except when our Lord used His miraculous power to hide Himself.[2] But in the Resurrection His was a spiritual body, a glorified body, belonging not to earth, and unlike the natural body in which He died in this—that it was invisible to those still in the flesh, except when He used His Divine power to manifest its presence. Our Lord had all along refused to display His Divine power in order to force upon men the acceptance of His teaching or of His claims. He did not cast Himself from the pinnacle of the Temple when urged to do so;[3] He did not summon the legions of angels to fight for His kingdom when questioned by Pilate;[4] He would not come down from the cross.[5] Neither did He will to force on men the acceptance of the fact of His Resurrection by a display of Himself before the world. Conviction was to come home to men quite otherwise—through His Holy Spirit speaking, teaching, and

[1] Acts x. 40.

[2] St. Luke iv. 30; St. John viii. 59.

[3] St. Matt. iv. 5–7.

[4] St. John xviii. 36.

[5] St. Matt. xxvii. 40, 43.

working in His Church. Even to His chosen ones our Lord did not will that His presence should be manifested except occasionally. He reminded them of the change that had come to Him by His Resurrection when He said, "These are the words which I spake unto you, *while I was yet with you*."[1] He was indeed with them when He spoke these words, but yet He speaks as if He were not, because His presence no longer belongs to this world by right. He has put off mortality and is clothed with immortality. It was sufficient for the work which He designed to effect by His appearances that His disciples should know the reality of His Resurrection, and this was impressed upon them by the appearances that are recorded by the Evangelists.

Our Lord then seems to have used His power to make visible His resurrection body for two purposes: to assure the disciples that it was He Himself Who was risen from the dead, and to comfort those who were in doubt and sorrow because they were conscious only of the loss of their Master. This may be the reason why half of the recorded appearances took place on the day of His Resurrection, while the remaining five were distributed over the thirty-nine days that intervened between that day and the Ascension. Again, one who was inventing a story of the Resurrection would almost certainly have described it as taking place in the sight of the Apostles and others, whereas, as far as we know, our Lord arose unseen by any human eye. After Pentecost the Apostles bore witness to the Resurrection with great power,[1] but God brought them to the knowledge of it in the first instance by the ministry of Angels, and then He showed Himself to them.

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[1] St. Luke xxiv. 44.

When Lazarus was raised from the dead he came forth from the grave in the sight of those who stood by,[2] and this was suitable, since the return of Lazarus was to a life such as he had lived before. But with Christ it was not so; He was raised from the dead to die no more—freed from all dominion of death; hence it is written, "In that He liveth, He liveth unto God."[3]

His Resurrection fitly therefore was made known in the first place by the Angels, who are usually chosen by God to reveal to men those things which lie outside their knowledge.

They who arose from the dead with Christ were also not seen except by "chosen witnesses," since they too had received the spiritual body that belongs to the future life. We read that "many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after His Resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."[4] They waited—hovering as it were on the confines of two worlds, until they were taken up with their Lord into heaven at the Ascension; "When He ascended up on high, He led a multitude of captives."[5]

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[1] Acts iv. 33. [2] St. John xi. 44. [3] Rom. vi. 10.
[4] St. Matt. xxvii. 52, 53. [5] Eph. iv. 8. (See margin.)

I.

We find then in the story of the Resurrection that the recorded appearances of our Lord are illustrations of the continuity of His Mission when He came "to seek and to save that which was lost."[1]

There is little doubt that if the story of His appearances had been a fiction we should have had the first appearance as granted to the Blessed Virgin, and the next to the Beloved Disciple, or perhaps to St. Peter. No impostor would have thought of making the first appearance to St. Mary Magdalene. It would have naturally seemed fitting that our Lord's Mother, or the Beloved Disciple, or St. Peter, should be the first to see the newly risen Christ. St. Mark, however, settles the question by the plain assertion, "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils."[2]

Although we might have expected otherwise, we can see a fitness in this first appearance to Mary Magdalene. It illustrates the continuity of the work of Him Who came "not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."[3]

Our Lord had more than once refused to place the claims of earthly relationship before His "Father's business."[4] He had a work to do, and He pursued it steadily.

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[1] St. Luke xix. 10.

[2] St. Mark xvi. 9.

[3] St. Luke v. 32.

[4] St. Luke ii. 49; viii. 19–21.

Very fitly, then, is Mary Magdalene—the penitent—chosen as the first to whom He manifested Himself after His Resurrection, for the Apostle tells us that Christ was "delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."[1]

Long ages before the Incarnation God had met the fallen Eve in the cool of the evening; He had called her out from among the trees of the garden, where she desired to hide herself from His Presence, to hear of the curse of sin and of the penalty of death; but He also spoke to her of One Who should redeem.[2] Now God "manifest in the flesh" meets Mary Magdalene in the cool of the morning of the Resurrection.[3] He finds her weeping and seeking blindly for her beloved Lord. So far from hiding herself from the presence of the Lord, she laments that He is past her finding out. She mourns for Him as dead, Who has overcome death; she imagines wicked men have taken away her Lord, when all the while He is at her side. "Seek, and ye shall find";[4] the Master is only waiting to reveal Himself, as He so often waits to see if we shall persevere in our search. St. Gregory says Mary Magdalene "sought the body, and found it not; she persevered in seeking, and by this perseverance she finds what she sought. Thus, by being not at once gratified, her longings are increased, for holy desires grow when they are not immediately granted. She therefore, who thus loves, again leans forward to that sepulchre into which she had looked before; and now let us see what fruit this power of love hath, which a second time renews her search." "As she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain."[1] And yet these two angels had not been seen there by others, nor by herself before.

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[1] Rom. iv. 25.

[2] Gen. iii. 15.

[3] St. John xx. 14–16.

[4] St. Matt. vii. 7.

The angels speak to her, and then she perceives One standing near—not the gardener, as at first she supposes, but One Who "calleth His own"[2] by name—her Lord Himself, her Master. In turning our thoughts to the lessons we may learn from this first appearance of our Lord to St. Mary Magdalene, we find the story full of comfort. Had our Lord appeared first to His Blessed Mother or St. John, we should not have been surprised; rather it would have seemed most fitting and most natural. But we should have missed the sense of fellowship which we feel in the appearance to Mary Magdalene. The Blessed Virgin and St. John stand out as examples of those who have never sinned wilfully against God—but we? Whereas the choice of Mary Magdalene as the one who should first behold Him is a most strong proof of our Lord's love for those who have sinned and repented. "Behold, I, even I, will both search My sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out My sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.... I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away."[1]

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[1] St. John xx. 11, 12.

[2] St. John x. 3.

We may, even after our conversion, but dimly understand the ways of God; we may seek "the living among the dead," but as long as we *do* seek Him, He will not be far away. He will draw near, and in the resurrection, if not before, "we shall see Him as He is,"[2] for surely He will "in no wise cast out"[3] any who seek for Him, since He has come Himself to seek that which was lost. Only we must be sure that it is the Master Whom we desire to find, Whom we follow, and Whom we seek. "Those that seek Me early shall find Me"[4] is a promise that is not qualified as men would qualify it.

The tears of Mary Magdalene witnessed to the depth of her sorrow in being deprived of the visible presence of Jesus Christ. Even so a broken and contrite heart mourns over the separation from God caused by sin. As we repent, as—figuratively if not literally—we weep over our own loss of Jesus Christ, our spiritual vision is cleansed; the mist of tears shed in penitence, instead of blinding our eyes, does but serve to quicken our vision; and we see what before had escaped our notice—the ministries of grace—the angels of His presence. We hear new voices from what had seemed to be but the empty tomb of a dark remembrance. "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen."

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[1] Ezek. xxxiv. 11, 12, 16.

[2] 1 St. John iii 2.

[3] St. John vi. 37.

[4] Prov. viii. 17.

And then as our eyes are lifted up we see more, but not yet do we recognise Who it is that shows Himself to us. That is effected by His own word to each individual soul. "He calleth His own sheep by name." It was when "Jesus saith unto her, Mary," that the Magdalene "turned herself, and saith unto Him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master." It is when He speaks some such word to our own soul, that we turn fully towards Him and recognise *Who* it is that calls us: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand."[1]

"Jesus saith unto her, Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father."[2] These words are difficult to understand. It may, perhaps, be that our Lord is throughout these appearances keeping Himself apart from the satisfaction of mere earthly affection. Not, of course, that we should undervalue for a moment the beauty of human love and its manifestations, but that in the Resurrection we should learn to look for a deeper motive in the actions and words of our Lord. If it was not His will to appear first to her whom He loved most, or to the Beloved Disciple, so it may be that it was not His will to allow Himself to be touched and handled for any motive that did not serve the main purpose of His appearance. This would account for our Lord's words to Mary Magdalene, "Touch Me not," and explain the invitation to the disciples, "Handle Me, and see,"[1] and to St. Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing."[2] Nothing but the touch of the actual body of the risen Lord would serve to convince Thomas of the truth of the Resurrection. Nothing less could draw from him the cry, "My Lord and my God"; but the instant Jesus called the Magdalene by her name, "Mary," she believed, and confessed Him to be "Rabboni," the Master. Our Lord deals with each soul according to its needs. To some He gives sensible gratification when they draw near to Him in prayer or Holy Communion; to others whose faith is more perfect He grants no such sweetness. "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

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[1] St. John x. 27, 28.

[2] St. John xx. 17.

Mary intuitively grasped the fact of the identity of the risen Lord with the Master Whom she had known and loved before the Passion, so that she needed to be reminded that although the same, yet her Lord was clothed with immortality. His flesh and blood were not now as they had been in the natural body that had suffered and died, but were glorified in the spiritual body that belonged of right not to earth, but to heaven —the Father's home—whither He must shortly ascend.

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[1] St. Luke xxiv. 39.

[2] St. John xx. 27.

"Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father."

Both Mary Magdalene and St. Thomas were therefore taught the lesson that each needed.

Mary Magdalene was taught the spiritual nature of that flesh which she doubted not to be real. St. Thomas was taught the reality of the body which he thought to be either a spirit, or else perhaps an illusion.

The mind that would contemplate the uncreated Beauty must begin by concentration of its love on "one fair form,"[1] but it must not stop there. On the other hand, it must not deny the beauty and reality of visible, tangible forms, if it would grasp the perfection of Beauty in the abstract. In the words of St. Paul, God has given us to know "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."[2]

Or again, "The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead."[3]

Mary Magdalene has to be taught to pass from the region of sense to that of pure faith. Thomas must learn that faith is not imagination, and the Lord he has to make known as "ascended" and reigning is no fancy of the brain—no mere abstract Idea, but a Man clothed with a real though spiritualised body.

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[1] PLATO'S *Phædrus*. [2] 2 Cor. iv. 6. [3] Rom. i. 20.

II.

Socrates was wont to say that he never walked beyond the city walls because he was so fond of learning. From trees and fields he had nothing to learn, but from the men in the city he could continually add to his knowledge. He was, however, persuaded by the lad Phædrus to break through his rule, and to the memorable walk beside the Ilissus we owe one of the most beautiful of the Dialogues. The man and the boy talked as they rested beneath the plane tree "thick and spreading," with the *agnus castus* adding its grateful shelter against the sun and filling the air with its scent. There, too, was the delicious spring, sparkling in its cool depths, and charming the ear with its bubbling plash. The airiness of the spot, the chirp of the cicalas, the sense of dedication imparted by the images of gods and votive gifts, provide a picturesque background for the discourse that follows.

We are told in this Dialogue that the sight of the beautiful forms of this world are the means by which the mind is carried back to a still more wonderful beauty that it perhaps caught a glimpse of long ages ago, at a time when it "companied with a god" in the vast expanse of heaven.

In the Gospel story of the first Easter Day we meet also with two disciples going "into the country,"[1] and tradition tells us that one was of mature age, the other but a youth.

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[1] St. Mark xvi. 12; St. Luke xxiv. 13.

As they walk they converse of a lost Presence—and memory carries them back to the time when they had indeed "companied with a God." But now they are sad, for strange things have happened—the Master is gone, their hopes are dashed to the ground, and nothing is left but the recollection of One Who seems to have falsified their hopes, and yet had left them with an indelible conviction of His goodness. To add to their perplexity, certain women had spread abroad a strange tale of a vision of angels, who said that the Master was alive—that He was risen from the dead.

"And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus Himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know Him."[1] The two were seeking their Lord as truly as Mary Magdalene, but in a different way. She, in tears and blind love—they, in reasoning and perplexity. All are, however, equally filled with sadness at the loss of Him they loved. Mary supposed that He was "the gardener"—the two disciples thought Him "a stranger" who had come up to Jerusalem too late for the feast. So they pour out their tale of the great events of the last few days; the Stranger listens. Then He suddenly turns towards them with a strange and unexpected vehemence of words. "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?"[1]

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[1] St. Luke xxiv. 13-16.

The disciples had known the letter of Holy Scripture —they were familiar with its prophecies, but yet "their eyes were holden." The Old Testament was full of the Messiah and of His Passion, and the Stranger seemed to ask if the familiar words had not prepared them for all that was causing such sad perplexity: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?"

Had they no recollection of the words, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth"?[2] Yes, they had read the words, but of whom the prophet spake—whether "of himself or of some other man," they could not say. Then, just as Philip, later on, when he met the Ethiopian, "opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus"[3]—so now Jesus Himself "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."[4] Our Lord met their anxious reasoning by showing that the suffering and death of Christ was nothing but what they, who held the Scriptures to be "the oracles of God,"[5] should expect. The very things that amazed, distressed, and scandalised them were just

[1] St. Luke xxiv. 25, 26.
[2] Isaiah liii. 7.
[3] Acts viii. 35.
[4] St. Luke xxiv. 27.
[5] Rom. iii. 2.

the things that should have confirmed their faith and trust in the Christ.

Among the many lessons that we learn from this meeting on the way to Emmaus, we are surely taught that the Bible may be read carefully, and yet remain a sealed book; it needs a Divine interpreter. The theory of the Bible being alone the rule of faith, and each man his own interpreter, is shown to be untenable. The Holy Spirit through the mouth of Philip asked the Ethiopian this question—"Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him."[1] Even so our Lord Himself, when on earth, was the supreme interpreter of His own word. After His Ascension He sent His Holy Spirit to be its interpreter, speaking through the Church: "He that heareth you heareth Me"[2]—and because some might think the words only applied to the Apostles, He said further, speaking of their successors—"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."[3] There is, of course, very much in Holy Scripture that needs no interpretation—that is perfectly clear. On the other hand, there are things doctrinal—and many, too—"hard to be understood."[4] Apart from the Divine interpretation given by the Church of all that is difficult, and yet needful for us to know, there is no security against error, perplexity, and dismay. Of all who hear not "the Church"[1] it is true to say their eyes are holden, and the Christ they know and perhaps love is not known, and therefore not loved as He might be, and as He ought to be.

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[1] Acts viii. 30, 31.

[2] St. Luke x. 16.

[3] St. Matt. xxviii. 20.

[4] 2 St. Peter iii. 16.

It is full of deep significance that even when our Lord Himself interpreted the Scriptures, the understanding of the disciples was not fully enlightened. Their hearts burned within them while the Stranger talked with them, and while He opened to them the Scriptures—but it was not until they had pressed Him to "abide with" them, and were sharing with Him that mystic meal, that "He was known of them in breaking of bread."[2]

The "breaking of bread" now is the great means ordained of God for the showing forth of that Passion which perplexed the two disciples. It is when we do "His will" that we are made to "know of the doctrine."[3] At Emmaus "He took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him."

Long centuries before, we read of one who took the fruit of the forbidden tree and "did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened."[4] They were opened to know of their fall and their ruin.

To-day the order is reversed—"the Man" Christ

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[1] St. Matt. xviii. 17.

[2] St. Luke xxiv. 28–35.

[3] St. John vii. 17.

[4] Gen. iii. 6, 7.

Jesus, the second Adam, gives to His Bride, the Church, His own Body and His own Blood—the fruit of the life-giving tree of the Cross—and as she obeys the command, "Take, eat," her eyes are opened to know Him, and the meaning of His word, and to understand the way in which He leads His people to follow Him through a dark and mysterious Passion to the conquest of evil, the victory over death, and the entry into eternal life.

The feast is soon over—the actual Presence is quickly withdrawn—but the effect remains, now as then; "their eyes were opened, and they knew Him; and He vanished out of their sight." He was gone, but His "peace" was left behind.

We have not the same excuse as the two disciples had for perplexity, doubt, and sadness now. We have seen the triumph of Christ: His Name, then unknown, is now the Name known throughout the world, and worshipped by millions. Wherever we go, the cross points upward from the buildings set apart for the offering of that great Sacrifice and Sacrament, which He ordained "the same night in which He was betrayed," and which He recalled to memory on the evening of His Resurrection. But still perplexity and even doubt will come, and often fill the soul with sadness. Let us at such times read again the gracious story of the Evangelist, and go up with the two disciples and the Stranger in spiritual pilgrimage to Emmaus.

It may be at His own table He awaits our coming, and that it is there, when we obey His command and accept His invitation, that He wills to "speak peace" to our souls. Many have found Him in the "breaking of bread," who have missed Him elsewhere.

"Here, O my Lord, I see Thee face to face;
Here would I touch and handle things unseen;
Here grasp with firmer hand the eternal grace,
And all my weariness upon Thee lean.

"Here would I feed upon the bread of God,
Here drink with Thee the royal wine of heaven;
Here would I lay aside each earthly load;
Here taste afresh the calm of sin forgiven.

"This is the hour of banquet and of song,
This is the heavenly table spread for me;
Here let me feast, and, feasting, still prolong
The brief, bright hour of fellowship with Thee.

"Too soon we rise; the symbols disappear;
The feast, though not the love, is past and gone;
The bread and wine remove, but Thou art here,
Nearer than ever, still my Shield and Sun.

"I have no help but Thine; nor do I need
Another arm save Thine to lean upon.
It is enough, my Lord, enough indeed;
My strength is in Thy might, Thy might alone.

"But see, the Pillar-cloud is rising now,
And moving onward thro' the desert night;
It beckons, and I follow, for I know
It leads me to the heritage of light.

"Feast after feast thus comes and passes by,
Yet passing, points to that glad feast above,
Giving sweet foretaste of the festal joy,
The Lamb's great bridal feast of bliss and love!"[1]

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[1] Part of Hymn by the late H. BONAR, D.D., from *Hymns of Faith and Hope.*

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) Gen. iii. 8. In the primeval Eden man hid himself from "the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day." But God called him, and opened his eyes to know how great his fall had been.

(2) Gen. v. 22–24; vi. 9. After the Fall the spiritual life of those who served God is described as a walk with God. The first need in such a walk is agreement. (See Amos iii. 3.)

(3) Micah vi. 6–9. Justice, mercy, and humility, are what God seeks in our walk with Him.

(4) St. Matt. xxii. 16; St. John xiv. 6. Jesus Christ not only teaches the way of life, but He is "the way." We must walk in His steps, hear His words, and do His commands.

(5) St. Luke xxiv. 13–35. In this "walk with God" on the way to Emmaus the two disciples are led into the way of peace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

(6) Rev. iii. 4. Man in Eden soiled the robe of original righteousness, and hid himself from God. The promise to those who guard the grace of God is, "They shall walk with Me in white" in the heavenly paradise. "The nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light" of the eternal Light. (Rev. xxi. 24.)

VI.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

Love, the Interpreter of Life

Prophecy

"Whoso dwelleth under the defence of the most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." (Ps. xci. 1.)

Jesus Christ

"Because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away." (St. John xvi. 6, 7.)

The Soul

"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. . . . Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" (Rom. viii. 28, 35.)

VI.

Love, the Interpreter of Life[1]

THE Resurrection of Jesus Christ is a very wonderful example of the way in which God fulfils His designs in spite of the wickedness of men. A false Apostle might betray his Master, the unjust judge might give the Innocent up to death, the priests might bear false witness, and the soldiers cruelly abuse their power; the Crucified might be abandoned by nearly every earthly friend, and cry out to God Himself, "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" and yet all the while the overruling providence of God is working out without one moment's delay an abiding triumph over sin and over death.

All the powers of darkness that threatened Jesus Christ and attacked Him were hopelessly and completely defeated when He arose from the dead.

God has certainly not spared His own Son the fullest knowledge of those trials, which, when they now in some measure befall the Christian, are thought to be a sign either that God does not care for His people, or else that He is powerless to protect them.

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[1] This reading is adapted from a French sermon of M. Bersier.

The Cross of our Lord—if not the sorrows of His Mother and the history of His Saints—should teach us another explanation of the mystery of suffering. St. Paul had his full share of all earthly troubles, and yet he can fearlessly write, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God."[1]

The statement made in these words is indeed at first sight a difficult one to accept; and yet nothing is more elementary than the truth proclaimed. Without faith in the control by God of our destiny, without belief in what we speak of as "providence," what remains of the Christian faith? Nevertheless, how many admit it in theory who have no knowledge of the consolation which a realisation of these words brings to the heart; some perhaps have even felt, as they read the Apostle's words, an involuntary doubt flash through the mind.

And outside the too narrow circle of those who believe, these words provoke a smile—with some, a smile of pity for the simple, trusting credulity of those who find consolation in them; with others, a smile of contempt at the absurd presumption and pride of those who think their insignificant concerns are the object of God's care and government.

In justice, however, we must admit that the construction often put upon these words is calculated rather to repel than to attract those who are in doubt as to their truth. When we see, as we not infrequently do, one laid by on a sick bed, broken by suffering, by neglect, by poverty; and yet not doubting the Divine goodness, but calmly, firmly, and with heroic faith repeating that all is working for good—we are touched, we are filled with reverence and respect, for we recognise there both the voice of the great Apostle himself, and the spirit which animated him when he penned those words.

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[1] Rom. viii. 28.

But when, on the other hand, amid ease and selfish luxury perhaps, we hear one flatter himself with the thought that his destiny is privileged above that of others, and that providence has disposed everything for his happiness, for his health, for his pleasure, then we understand the sceptical smile, and are not, perhaps, much astonished at its contempt.

But is it not true that it is in this narrow light that the great thought of the providence of God is often presented?

For instance, an epidemic breaks out, someone is spared when many on all sides are stricken down; and in this he sees a sign of God's special love for himself. Another, perhaps, escapes from fire or shipwreck: in the account which he gives of his deliverance he would suggest, apparently, that God has had no pity for any but himself, and that he has been, to the exclusion of those who perished, the object of the special care of Providence.

This reminds one of the words of "the atheist" of old, words which Cicero has preserved for us.

The philosopher Diagoras, landing one day at Samothrace, visited a temple there; they showed him the votive tablets hung up round the walls by those who had escaped from shipwreck. "Can you," they said, "deny the providence of the gods, when all around you are the witnesses of their intervention?"

"Ah," answered Diagoras, "but I must not forget also the witness of those who are buried beneath the waves."

In fact, if we would recall with joy that God does act in the saving of life, in preservation from danger and suffering, we must at the same time strongly protest against those who imagine they see marks of a special love and preference in such deliverance from outward dangers.

No, let us never forget it, those who have been struck down at our side by some fatal illness, those who have perished in the waters of the sea, are as dear to God as we who remain, nay, perhaps, more dear.[1]

And yet how often we hear conclusions the very reverse of this put forward to explain some apparent misfortune.

A child is snatched away from the home of which it has been the light; and some are sure to be found who will ask if the parents had not made the child rather an idol.

An unexpected calamity falls upon a neighbour, and, lo, we are told that there must have been some hidden evil which called down this chastisement.

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[1] Wisd. iv. 10–14.

Who can tell the harm done to the cause of religion by such rash judgments?

In vain, then, has the Book of Job been given to us, with its plain condemnation of this error; equally in vain has the Master declared that the Galileans, killed by the falling of the tower of Siloam, were not more blameworthy than others who were uninjured.[1]

What is the idea that lies at the root of these thoughtless judgments? It is that men imagine that they can know the mind of God only from certain outward signs, an idea that is directly opposed to the teaching of St. Paul, when he affirms that *all*, "all things work together for good to them that love God." There is, he says, a special providence which watches over those who love God, and orders all for their welfare. Let us consider this. But, at the same time, how can we even approach the subject without coming into contact with the many difficulties to which this truth gives rise?

In the first place we are told it is pride that leads men to think that God has any concern with their trivial affairs.

Pride! So then, when you see your little ones kneel down at night for their prayer, and speak to God of their faults, and ask Him in the simplicity of their childish heart to help them, to make them better, to watch over and protect their father and mother—this is the teaching of pride—an act of pride! But does anyone really think this—really in good faith believe it? No.

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[1] St. Luke xiii. 4.

But some may say that those Christians who speak of the guarding and protecting love of God have not the simplicity of children. They have not; we admit it. As I have already said, their pride does often spoil and mar their faith; but what does that prove? That they are only men and imperfect—nothing more. For them the ideal of the Gospel is to become "as little children."[1] Blame them if you will for harsh judgments, for allowing pride to interpret falsely the workings of God; but do not tax them with pride when they fall down before God their Father, and expectantly look to Him for all that is for their true welfare.

But perhaps someone will insist on our insignificance, our littleness. But however unimportant we may be, none can arrest the irresistible impulse of the human heart towards God. Now if we are great enough to be able to believe in God, to love Him, to feel that He alone can satisfy our heart, where is the pride in believing also that this impulse is a true one, one that can be satisfied, and that God will respond to it?

The feeble flower of the field turns morning by morning towards the sunlight to gain strength and sweetness, and shall man be accused of pride because he would turn to the source of life and happiness for fresh vigour, and for the satisfaction of the instincts implanted within him?

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[1] St. Matt. xviii. 3.

But some again shift the attack, and refuse, on the ground of experience, to accept the words of St. Paul. What is the good, they ask, of talking of Divine intervention, and of providence? Why flatter yourself at all with such a belief as that "all things work together for good to them that love God"? The reality, they say, gives the lie to such a belief.

You who pray, are you spared more than others? Are you less deceived by false friends? Have you less severe trials? Does illness pass you by untouched? Does sorrow make less havoc in your home? And when you try to escape from the troubles that threaten you, are you not obliged—as we are who do not pray—to have recourse to human means, taught by a power so well within our comprehension as that of experience? Ah! like us you make mistakes, you suffer, you die; and you still pretend that, in the affairs of life, everything works together for good!

Here we have the most formidable, and at the same time the most common objection which opposes our faith. How often have we not heard some such words both from the learned and from the ignorant; how often perhaps has not such a thought even frozen our own prayers, and chilled the emotions of our heart.

Before answering this let us be clear about one point. The whole force of the objection rests on the fact that they who love God suffer the evils of life equally with the unbeliever, and hence it is concluded that the belief that all things work together for their good is false and absurd.

But those who argue thus have forgotten that they are confounding "good" with visible prosperity—a confusion never made in Holy Scripture. Let us distinguish between these two things, and the objection is already half answered.

What God calls our "good" is not always what we call happiness.

Happiness seems to us to involve success, health, fortune, friends, and perhaps pleasure; but in God's eyes the "good" is holiness and eternal life.

We dream of power, wealth, influence, esteem of men, and lo! a sudden misfortune; our wealth dwindles away, our reputation is threatened, our health is gone, our life seems entirely spoiled. Oh, cruel fate! we cry out; but let us consider. In the revelation given to us by God we are taught to see that our true happiness, our eternal good, lies perhaps in that very misfortune. Possibly we may learn from it the true life—detachment from all that is selfish and base; and to feel that the pomps and vanities of the world are indeed empty and fleeting; from it we may learn true love—the beauty and attraction of sacrifice; it is there—in that very trial—that for us the way of eternal life begins; from it we learn, in spite of these bitter sorrows, that all is working for our final, eternal good.

It is true, then, that outwardly indeed God allows the same troubles to overtake the just and the unjust. The thousand and one things that make or mar material prosperity are allowed to work upon the worldly state of all alike. The storm as well as the sunshine falls equally on the righteous and the wicked.

We can, in some measure, see why this is so. We know that God does not now always combine worldly happiness with faith, and success with piety. We know this, and understand it, for if He acted otherwise—if all the righteous prospered, if all the wicked were unfortunate, the service of God would no longer be a service of love, but of interest; and God does not care for a mercenary love any more than we do. But I repeat that this objection is only true as regards appearances, and to him who looks only, so to speak, upon the surface in considering the Divine goodness.

You believe in progress—you believe that "righteousness exalteth a nation,"[1] and that where there is on earth most faith, most goodness, most uprightness, there also is liberty, power, light, and truest happiness. You acknowledge this, but let us also call in the witness of believers themselves, for they have surely a right to be heard.

It is said that they are stricken by the same evils as others, and we allow that it is true—the same accidents, the same sorrows as befall others come to them. Let us question them, and they will answer that beneath these things which affect their exterior life they have learned to know and to discern, even in details, the secret, but nevertheless real, action of a Divine Teacher, Who places them in a school which they would not have chosen, withdrawing them from the world and from self.

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[1] Prov. xiv. 34.

They will tell us that sometimes the marks of this Divine providence (quite unmistakably clear to them) have drawn from them tears of self-abasement and gratitude. They will tell us that even in their most severe trials they see signs of the Divine goodness. Yes, these men, who appear to the eyes of some to be nothing but the playthings of fate, will tell us that "chance" is a vain word, and that they are persuaded of the truth of the words of St. Paul, "all things work together for good to them that love God."

Neither let us forget that the way in which an event tells upon us depends on two things—namely, the nature of the event itself, and the disposition, the spirit, of him to whom it happens. Now, although as far as we can see, all may seem identical in the lot of him who loves God, and of him who does not love Him, we must allow that, according to the disposition of the former, all that befalls him may contribute to his good. It is certain that whatever happens to such a one, tells upon him according to the spirit he is in. It is this inner spirit of the man which gives to every event its true and real significance. To take an example: we see in nature those forces, hidden or manifest, which sometimes terrify us with their power of destruction. In the flowers of the field

—under some graceful form—this power may lurk as a subtle poison; in the atmosphere we breathe is the power of the hurricane which overthrows everything in its passage—there is the electricity which seems to tear open the darkened heavens, and which threatens us with destruction.

Place an uncultured and ignorant man in the presence of these forces of nature, and he finds in them only suffering and death. But the man of science comes forward, and see what happens. The forces are the same, but from the flower he extracts the poison, and by a skilful chemical process he seeks for, and finds in it, a remedy for disease; he discovers life in that which seems to contain only death. Again, he waits for the breath of heaven, he spreads the sails of his ship, and uses the wind as his servant. The force of electricity, apparently so destructive, he makes his messenger, and by its means flashes his thoughts round the world. In fact, all these forces of nature, fatal and destructive though they may be, conspire together under the guidance of genius to prolong life, to enrich and ennoble man.

And this is a feeble yet true picture of the way in which the faithful Christian can turn all the events of life to his good, even all the evils that befall him. It has been said, "the same accident overtakes all men, good or bad, him who prays, and him who blasphemes." But do we not also see that the fatality is only apparently the same, and that in reality most different and opposite results follow? For those who turn from God become harder and more bitter in consequence of trouble, while those who humble themselves are by means of their very troubles made more holy, are brought ever nearer to eternal life.

For instance, we see the Christian weighed down with failure, with sorrow, with sickness and most cruel suffering. You see this soul seize, as it were, these forces which threaten its destruction; you see it humble itself, pray to and even praise God; and so press greatness, spiritual triumph, and holiness from that which seemed to contain nothing but misery and despair.

Marvellous victory through the spirit of Christ! Victory a thousand times more admirable than those of mere human genius—by which "all things work together for good to them that love God."

There is the secret of life—there is the power of St. Paul himself, for his own words find in this great Apostle their living realisation. Looking at it from the outside, what life was less favoured than that of St. Paul? How senseless must his words seem to those who believe only in fate—those grand words "all things work together for good."

All things? What! his feebleness, his temptations, his failures, his poverty, his perils, his shipwrecks, his imprisonments? What! the endless persecutions, the false friends, the faithless Christians, the hatred of Jews, the scoffs of Greeks?

What! his prison at Rome, the loneliness of that last hour, his martyrdom?

Ah, there was enough, a thousand times enough, to make him doubt the providence of God; but you see this great Apostle find in these sufferings his life and his strength.

You see him under the most searching trials become more and more humble, more simple, more gentle, more full of love; you see his heart enlarge more and more towards all men with the charity of Jesus Christ; you see his faith disperse the clouds of doubt as soon as they appear, and shine out more brilliantly, more magnificently; you see St. Paul find the secret of his strength in the very cross which threatens pain and death.

And you are not surprised, for it is beneath the cross, the Christian standard, that his soul is formed; it is there that he seeks day by day for strength; it is there that he learns what he never forgets—that "all things work together for good to them that love God."

Who would have thought that the cruel cross of torture and death could be the means of triumph and victory?

The cross which on the first Good Friday, laden with its Victim, forsaken of all—the cross with its ignominy and horror—was the type of failure and of contempt; it was a scandal and a folly. But to-day? The cross—the cross of a risen and glorified Christ—is the very sign of salvation to men, the very emblem of the victory of God.

"All things work together for good to them that *love* God." It is not said they work together for good to the scoffing, frivolous, and unbelieving; but "to them that *love* God." Love is the great science that enables us to know God, Who is "Life," and to understand all the strange trials that we meet in our own life. Love is the key which opens the very Heart of God; for "God is love." They who love God know Him as Father, Redeemer, and Comforter. They have learned to trust Him as a Friend. They do not ask always to understand, for they remember His words, "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter."[1] It might have seemed impossible that it could be "expedient"[2] for Jesus Christ to leave His disciples alone in the world, and yet they trusted His word, and He fulfilled His promise. He sent them the Divine Spirit to be His Vicar and their ever-present Guide, Teacher, and Comforter. Yet they, like their Master, had to bear the cross, by death to enter into life.

In our afflictions we sometimes doubt if all does work together for good; we doubt, and perhaps we accuse our God—we find it hard to believe in His love. But wait; a day will come when the ways of God, so mysterious now, shall be made plain; when "chance" shall be no more named, when fatality shall disappear like a vain dream; the day comes, it draws near, when in the clearer light and holier atmosphere of another world we shall see in wonder and thankfulness that "*all* the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth"[1] to them that love Him, and that all which has seemed most wrong has worked out our own eternal good.

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[1] St. John xiii. 7.

[2] St. John xvi. 7.

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) St. John xi. 1–4. Our Lord did not hinder grief from coming to those He especially loved.

(2) St. John xi. 5–17. Our Lord allowed sickness and death to do their work; they were to make His goodness and power known.

(3) St. John xi. 18–27. Martha cannot bear to sit still at home with Mary. She who was active in "much serving" is also anxious to learn why our Lord has allowed so great a calamity to fall upon her.

(4) St. John xi. 28–33. Mary, when she is sent for, goes to Jesus, and, falling down at His feet, utters the same implied reproach as Martha: "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died."

(5) St. John xi. 33–38. "Behold, how He loved him!" "Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." (2 Sam. i. 26.)

(6) St. John xi. 38–46. Sorrow is not usually "sent" by God; it is allowed by Him. The time will come when, for those who love God, there will be "no more sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." (Rev. xxi. 4.)

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[1] Ps. xxv. 9.

VII.

ROGATION DAYS

Prayer

Prophecy

"Thou that hearest the prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come." (Ps. lxv. 2.)

Jesus Christ

"Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My Name, He will give it you." (St. John xvi. 23.)

The Soul

"Hear the voice of my humble petitions, when I cry unto Thee: when I hold up my hands towards the mercy-seat of Thy holy temple." (Ps. xxviii. 2.)

VII.

Prayer

THE Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday before Ascension Day are kept by the Church as days of solemn supplication, and are called Rogation Days, because they are especially days of asking from God (in prayer[1]) a blessing upon the earth. Formerly the Litany was solemnly sung on those days as a great act of intercession.

By revelation God has made known to us the great mysteries of our faith; He has spoken to us. By prayer we place ourselves in a right relationship with God, we acknowledge Him to be the Creator of the world, as well as the Father of His children; by prayer man speaks with God. "His heavenly inspirations," wrote Hooker, "and our holy desires are as so many Angels of intercourse and commerce between God and us. As teaching bringeth us to know that God is the supreme Truth, so prayer testifieth that we acknowledge Him as our sovereign Good." Without God's grace we cannot perform good works; but the grace of God is obtained usually and principally through prayer and the holy Sacraments. These are the "means of grace," by the devout use of which we have a well-founded "hope of glory."[1] "Without Me," our Lord says, "ye can do nothing."[2] St. Augustine writes, "It is clear that God gives some things—for instance, the gift of faith—without men's seeking it by prayer; whilst other things He has in store only for those who pray for them, as the gift of final perseverance."[3]

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[1] *Rogatio*, the Latin equivalent of the word Litany.

(1) *What is meant by prayer.* Before we go further, it will be well to be clear as to what we understand by "prayer." The word "prayer" has a twofold meaning. In its wider sense it stands for any "lifting up of the mind and heart to God": this may be done without words. It may find its expression in either mental or vocal acts of petition, praise, thanksgiving, or adoration. Merely thinking about God is not, however, prayer. Neither is the exercising of our affections towards God exactly what we call prayer. Prayer is rather the union, the joint exercise of the intellect and the affections, or, as we commonly say, of the mind and heart.

(2) In a less wide sense, and more usually, we understand by prayer the making known of our needs to God.

Prayer is, then, of two kinds, vocal and mental. In mental prayer we use no words; vocal prayer, on the contrary, is the use of the voice in making our petitions.[4]

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[1] Prayer for "All sorts and conditions of men."

[2] St. John xv. 5.

[3] *De dono pers.*, lib. ii. c. 16.

[4] Mental prayer from *mens* = the mind. Vocal from *vox* = the voice.

Mental prayer can dispense with the use of the voice, but vocal prayer must include also the exercise of the mind. The mere repetition of words with no thought or attention to their meaning is not prayer. Our Lord reproved the Jews, who thought they should be heard for their "much speaking." "This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me."[1]

"If the understanding is really at work at all, how overwhelming are the ideas, the truths, which pass thus before it! a boundless Power, an Existence which knows neither beginning nor end. Then the substance of the petition, the motives which are alleged for urging it, the issues which depend upon its being granted or being refused, present themselves to the eyes of the understanding. . . . Next, to pray is to put the affections in motion, it is to open the heart. The object of prayer is the Uncreated Love, the Eternal Beauty; He of Whose beauty all that moves love and admiration here is at best a pale reflection."[2]

(2) *Why we pray.* We are obliged to make use of prayer because God has commanded us to do so, and because He has made prayer the condition for obtaining some graces needful for our salvation. Our Lord frequently urged upon the disciples the need of prayer. How clear are His words: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation"![3] He taught that "men ought always to pray,"[4] and St. Paul writes to the same

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[1] St. Mark vii. 6.
[2] Dr. LIDDON, *Some Elements of Religion.*
[3] St. Matt. xxvi. 41.
[4] St. Luke xviii. 1.

effect, "Pray without ceasing."[1] Prayer is therefore a Divine precept. That it is also a condition—or means—for the obtaining of some graces is also quite plainly taught in Holy Scripture. Our Lord in such passages as, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you";[2] "All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive";[3] "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My Name, He will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My Name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full,"[4] teaches us this truth clearly; and so does St. James when he writes, "Ye have not, because ye ask not."[5] Again, our Lord declared that certain evils could only be got rid of by prayer and fasting.[6]

(3) *Prayer a religious act.* But prayer is more than an act of obedience, more than a means for obtaining what we need from God. It is also an act of homage, an acknowledgment of the fact that it is God Who governs "all things in heaven and earth,"[7] and "from Whom all good things do come";[8] He is "the author and giver of all good things."[9] He it is "Whose never-failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth."[10]

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[1] 1 Thess. v. 17.
[2] St. Matt. vii. 7.
[3] St. Matt. xxi. 22.
[4] St. John xvi. 23, 24.
[5] St. James iv. 2.
[6] St. Matt. xvii. 21.
[7] Collect for the Second Sunday after Epiphany.
[8] Collect for the Fifth Sunday after Easter.
[9] Collect for the Seventh Sunday after Trinity.
[10] Collect for the Eighth Sunday after Trinity.

David confessed this truth when, offering his gifts for the future Temple, he said, "All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee."[1]

St. James writes, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."[2]

(4) *Prayer requires faith.* Prayer is also an act of faith. When our Lord was on earth multitudes came to Him in their troubles. They had faith in His power, and hope that He might use it in the way they desired. Sometimes our Lord delayed an answer, as in the case of the woman of Canaan;[3] at other times He granted what was asked at once. The leper who came and "worshipped Him, saying, Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean";[4] and the centurion, anxious for the life of the servant "who was dear unto him,"[5] stand (among others for whom our Lord worked His miracles) as representatives of a great multitude who bear witness to the fulfilment of the promise, "Ask, and ye shall receive"; for "all things are possible to him that believeth."[6] They came in faith, and did homage to the power and goodness of Jesus Christ. Our Lord Himself draws our attention to this aspect of prayer, as a manifestation of faith. To the woman of Canaan He granted her request with the words—"O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou

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[1] 1 Chron. xxix. 14.
[2] St. James i. 17.
[3] St. Matt. xv. 22–28.
[4] St. Matt. viii. 2.
[5] St. Luke vii. 2.
[6] St. Mark ix. 23.

wilt";[1] and of the centurion He "said unto the people that followed Him, . . . I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel."[2] On the other hand, want of faith limited the manifestations of our Lord's power by miracle; in "His own country," we read, "He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief."[3]

(5) *Prayer for temporal needs.* It is worth noticing that almost every prayer addressed to our Lord in the Gospels is for some temporal blessing—usually for recovery from sickness, or some bodily infirmity. God would surely teach us that He desires that we should look to Him in all our necessities—for those things which are necessary as well for the body as the soul.[4] Whatever it is lawful to desire, it is lawful to pray for; and as long as we pray in faith we cannot be wrong, though of course we may be mistaken in what is for our real welfare. Faith includes submission to the will of God, and teaches us to trust "Our Father," as knowing better than we can know what things are really for our temporal and eternal good. "And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us. And if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him."[5]

All prayer must be made in the spirit of the words in "The Lord's Prayer"—"Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven"—and in obedient imitation of the

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[1] St. Matt. xv. 28.
[2] St. Luke vii. 9.
[3] St. Matt. xiii. 58.
[4] Collect for the Second Sunday in Lent.
[5] 1 St. John v. 14, 15.

Divine Example, Who Himself prayed, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt."[1]

"Our ignorance in asking" must be ever kept in mind. We must pray to pray aright; that Thy servants "may obtain their petitions make them to ask such things as shall please Thee."[2]

Prayers for ourselves or others therefore should be very humble and submissive when they go beyond the "things that be *needful* both for our souls and bodies."[3] Our Lord Himself instructed us to look to God for the satisfaction of our bodily needs, when He taught us the petition, "Give us this day our daily bread." And yet our right to expect the watchful providence of God to provide for our needs is not altogether unconditional. It depends on our realisation of our relationship to God as "Our Father." His promise is, "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things"—all needful temporal gifts—"shall be added unto you."[4] Our Lord does not promise that the unbelieving, or careless, who entirely neglect and ignore religion, shall receive all these things, but those who dwell "in the secret place of the most High," those who dwell in union with the Incarnate Word "shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."[5] They find in the great mystery of the Incarnation a refuge and a hiding-place. In the "likeness of men"[1] there is revealed to them the "express image" of God. The Sacred Humanity is the created Shadow of the most High. Hence the Church prays with her Lord, not only for "daily bread," but also for deliverance from all "adversities which may happen to the body,"[2] for has not God said, "Because thou hast made the Lord . . . thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee"?[3] They make the Lord their habitation who accept the invitation given by the Son of Man when He said, "Abide in Me."[4]

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[1] St. Matt. xxvi. 39. [2] Collect for the Tenth Sunday after Trinity.
[3] Church Catechism. [4] St. Matt. vi. 33. [5] Ps. xci. 1.

(6) *Prayer for spiritual necessities.* In praying for the necessaries of the spiritual life we have less hesitation. It is undoubtedly the will of God that we should have His grace in our soul, that we should overcome the evil one, and persevere to the end; and yet it is especially for these spiritual graces that God wills we should ask in prayer. The supernatural life is necessarily one of close communion with God; it is not possible, therefore, to "abide" in grace without seeking it from "the author and giver of all good things."

Our prayer is, "Endue us with the grace of Thy Holy Spirit to amend our lives according to Thy Holy Word." Without the grace of God we can do nothing in the supernatural order. To the Holy Ghost it belongs to apply the redemption to our soul. It is His work also to ward off spiritual dangers, to keep away the "evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul,"[1] by filling our life with the thought of God. All these graces are, however, usually only given in answer to prayer. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"[2]

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[1] Phil. ii. 7.
[2] Collect for the Second Sunday in Lent.
[3] Ps. xci. 9, 10.
[4] St. John xv. 4.

(7) *Intercessory prayer.* By the precept of charity towards our neighbour we are bound to pray for others as well as for ourselves. "Pray one for another,"[3] is the command of St. James.

St. John Chrysostom writes—"Necessity is laid upon us that we pray for ourselves: fraternal love exhorts us to pray for others. Prayer that flows from love is dearer to God than that which results from necessity."

Our Lord Himself gave us no prayer in which we pray for ourselves only—but one that asks for all things for all men. "*Our* Father . . . give *us* this day our daily bread . . . forgive *us* . . . lead *us* . . . deliver *us*."

By word and example we are taught throughout the Bible the great value of intercessory prayer. St. Paul writes, "I exhort, therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men."[4] St. James would have us "pray one for another." The earliest prayers recorded in Holy Writ are intercessions.[5] In the first, Abraham prays, "O that

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[1] Collect for the Second Sunday in Lent. [2] St. Luke xi. 13.
[3] St. James v. 16. [4] 1 Tim. ii. 1. [5] Gen. xvii. 18; xviii. 23–32.

Ishmael might live before Thee!" The second is the long pleading with God for the cities of the plain.

Our Lord, in the parables of the friend coming at midnight,[1] and the importunate widow,[2] has taught us the same lesson. This being the case, it is not surprising that the Church has always insisted on the need of intercessory prayer, and that she has, in her public offices, given a large share of her petitions for "all sorts and conditions of men." The Litany and the Prayer for the Church Militant are merely notable examples of the spirit that runs through the offices and Liturgies of the Catholic Church.

We pray more especially "for the good estate of the Catholic Church"[3]—for its appointed rulers, the "Bishops, Priests and Deacons"[4]—and for all God's people—"To all Thy people give Thy heavenly grace."[5] We ask that there may be unity of faith, purity of doctrine, and holiness of life. We pray for our country and for its rulers;—for peace at home and defence against foreign enemies;—and for freedom from "plague, pestilence and famine."[6]

We pray especially at this season, during the Rogation Days—"That it may please Thee to give and preserve to our use the kindly fruits of the earth, so as in due time we may enjoy them."[6]

But we go further—and our prayers pass beyond our own lands in intercession for "all Christian kings, princes and governors"; that it may please God "to give to all nations unity, peace, and concord";[1] that He will "have mercy upon all men";[1] and make known His ways unto them, His "saving health unto all nations";[2] and that Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics "may be brought into His Church, together with those who in any other way "have erred and are deceived."[1]

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[1] St. Luke xi. 5–8. [2] St. Luke xviii. 1–5.

[3] Prayer "For all sorts and conditions of men."

[4] Litany [5] Prayer for the Church Militant. [6] Litany.

Indeed it would be difficult to find any who need our prayers, and are not prayed for in the intercessions of the Church used in public worship. For those distressed "in mind, body, or estate," we ask comfort and relief; we pray "that they may have patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions";[2] and we plead for "succour, help, and comfort" for "all that are in danger, necessity, and tribulation."[1]

(8) *Some difficulties.* It may be well here very briefly to touch upon certain difficulties that are often felt in regard to prayer.

(*a*) It is sometimes urged that prayer implies that the one prayed to is ignorant of our needs. But, as we read in the Gospel, "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things"—these temporal necessaries of life—and therefore why pray for them?

The answer may be that we do not pray because we think that our needs are not known to God, but that we may force ourselves to recognise the fact that God is the author and giver, and that it is His will that we should ask for what we need.

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[1] Litany.

[2] Prayer "For all sorts and conditions of men."

(*b*) By prayer we seem to try to bend the will of God to our will; but in God is "no shadow of turning." As the All-wise, He knows not only our needs, but also just how far it is for our real welfare that they should be supplied. But in reply to this objection, it must be said that we do not seek to change the will of God. God has, we believe, made some gifts to depend on our prayers. If we do not pray we do not receive them, because the will of God is to bestow these graces only upon those who ask for them. If we ask in ignorance for things that God has not willed to grant, even though we pray for them, then, as we have already noticed, it is of the essence of true prayer to be submissive and humble, so that, although we hope God may only be awaiting our prayer to grant our request, we yet have such confidence in His Fatherly goodness that if our prayer is not granted we accept His will, and our prayer becomes a means by which we seek and obtain grace to offer our will to the Divine will, using the Divine petition, "Not my will, but Thine, be done."

(*c*) Once more, it is argued that it is more liberal to give to one who does not ask than to one who does. Seneca has said, "Nothing costs more than what one buys by asking." But God is infinite in His bounty, and therefore would rather give freely than be asked for gifts.

To this we reply that God does indeed give many of

His gifts without being asked, but some He reserves for those who pray. This He does for our good, in order that we may be conscious of His existence, of His goodness, and of His providence. "Consider," says St. John Chrysostom, "how great is the honour you receive, in being allowed to converse with God in prayer; in being invited to converse with Jesus Christ, and to ask from Him what you will."

It might, however, seem from what has been said that the best prayer would be after the pattern given, according to Plato, by Socrates, who petitioned the gods for nothing in particular, but only that they would grant him all good things, and ward off all that was evil.

We too often undoubtedly ask for things that we are better without, but the truth seems to be that we may pray for whatever we can lawfully desire; only in all such prayers for temporal grace, or unusual spiritual gifts, we must leave the issue entirely in God's hands; we must, as we have said already, offer our will to His will. There are things which we can ask unconditionally, but these are only such gifts as can never be put to a wrong use. The Holy Spirit's guidance should be sought as to *what* we ask in prayer as well as in the manner we pray.

So far we have touched upon the essentials of true prayer; we have seen how in God's Word we are taught to pray with attention and devotion—not with the lips only, but with the heart also; we have noticed that humility will be necessary, for we know not what to pray for as we should, and must ever ask of God in submission to His will; and confidence will be necessary, because unbelief hinders prayer, and want of confidence implies a lack of faith and an absence of trust in the goodness of God. It is noticeable that in every case recorded in the Gospels in which our Lord was asked with confidence to work any miracle, He not only granted what was asked, but showed that He was pleased that it was made.

Prayers are not always—indeed not often—answered at once. If we are in earnest we shall certainly be persevering in our petitions. Our Lord's own example is the strongest proof of the lawfulness of perseverance in prayer, for thrice in Gethsemane He prayed in the same words for the removal of the bitter cup of His Passion. The parable of the unjust judge is another proof from our Lord's teaching that "men ought always to pray, and not to faint." St. James speaks of the "effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man" as a prayer that "availeth much."[1]

(9) *Prayer in the Name of Jesus.* Nor must we leave out some reference to the teaching of our Lord as to the efficacy of prayer offered in His Name to the Father, as well as that addressed to Himself. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My Name, He will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My Name: ask, and ye shall

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[1] St. James v. 16.

receive, that your joy may be full";[1]—"Whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name, that will I do."[2]

To ask "in the Name" of Jesus does not merely mean that we should conclude our prayers with the familiar words "through Jesus Christ our Lord,"—but it implies an appeal to our Lord as the great Intercessor. We pray through Jesus Christ when He, as our Representative, stands in the presence of God for us. A prayer that will infallibly be answered is one to which our Lord gives His Name—His sanction. The Father wishes to glorify the Son, and reserves many of His best gifts for those who ask in that Beloved Name.

All such prayers presuppose a living, vital union between the soul and Christ. Those in the grace of God are one with Jesus Christ; we pray that "we may evermore dwell in Him, and He in us,"—that we may abide in the Vine. Being thus united with Jesus Christ we pray through, with, and in Him—and we and our prayers are "accepted in the Beloved."[3]

For this reason prayers and intercessions are especially efficacious when offered at the time of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. Then the life-giving death of the Only-Begotten is represented before God—and all the redeemed are offered through, with, and in Him—"*per Ipsum, cum Ipso, in Ipso.*"[4]

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[1] St. John xvi. 23, 24.
[2] St. John xiv. 13.
[3] Eph. i. 6.
[4] From Canon of Latin Mass.

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) Gen. xviii. 23–32. (Abraham's prayer.) We see in this intercessory prayer how "the . . . prayer of a righteous man availeth much." The intercession of the Saints in heaven is a great help to the Church on earth.

(2) 1 Kings iii. 5–14. (Solomon's prayer for himself.) Our desire should be to work well in the vocation God has given us. We should pray for the graces needful. Distrust of our own powers and confidence in the power of God—humility—is what we incidentally learn from this prayer.

(3) 1 Kings viii. 22–53. A long prayer of intercession. We might learn from it to intercede with God for all who use our churches. How many needs, how many sorrows enter within their hallowed walls!

(4) Neh. i. 5–11. A pleading for mercy for ourselves and others.

(5) St. Luke xviii. 38, 41–43. A prayer for help in our bodily or temporal distresses. The pure in heart see God—their faith is clear-sighted.

(6) St. Luke xxiii. 39–43. For a good death, and speedy admission into Paradise.

Liturgical Notes for Ascensiontide

The Church invites us to keep three days of prayer (Rogations) before the Ascension of our Lord.

As they fall in Eastertide they are not fast days, but they are kept as days of "abstinence" from flesh meat.

The Rogation days date from the fifth century, when they were instituted by the Bishop of Vienne, and later on they were adopted by the whole Western Church.

The Ascension is a feast of the highest class, and one of the four festivals which are kept in the Church of England with an octave. The special Preface in the Holy Communion Service is to be used "upon Ascension Day and *seven days after*."

Between Ascension Day and Whit Sunday the Church would have us earnestly pray,—joining in spirit with the Blessed Virgin and the disciples in the upper room at Jerusalem—for a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

The Collect for the Sunday after Ascension Day might be used frequently during this time of expectation.

The Office hymns until Whitsuntide are:—

Vespers. *Salutis humanæ Sator.*
"Jesu, our Hope, our heart's Desire."—*A. and M.*, 150.

Matins. *Æterne Rex altissime.*
"O Lord most High, Eternal King."— *A. and M.*, 144.

Lauds (as at Vespers).

VIII.

ASCENSION DAY

The Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ

Type

"Behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." (Gen. xxviii. 12–15.)

Jesus Christ

"Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (St. Matt. xxviii. 18–20.)

The Soul

"I pray Thee, let a double portion of Thy Spirit be upon me." (2 Kings ii. 9.)

VIII.

The Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ

"IT is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will send Him unto you."[1] These words must have seemed strange indeed to the disciples. If it had been expedient that our Lord should come into the world, how should it now be expedient that He should go away? It is not surprising that the Apostles failed to understand what our Lord meant.

"We cannot tell what He saith."[2] It was only after the Ascension, and after the nine days of prayer, that the words were made clear by the coming of the Holy Spirit, Whose presence our Lord had promised. It was one of the offices of the Holy Spirit to bring to the remembrance of the Apostles all that Jesus Christ had taught them; "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, Whom the Father will send in My Name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."[3]

Looking back now with the light of this illuminating Spirit of God to guide us, we can see that it was indeed

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[1] St. John xvi. 7. [2] St. John xvi. 18. [3] St. John xiv. 26.

"expedient" that the sensible presence of Jesus Christ should be withdrawn. Before His Passion, our Lord speaking to His Father said, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do."[1] Again, when the hours of His crucifixion were well-nigh run out, He cried from the cross, "It is finished."[2] He had come to do a twofold work—to redeem the world by His life of suffering and by His death; that work was finished when He was crucified; He had given "His life a ransom for many,"[3] He had been "delivered for our offences."[4]

But this was not all: our Lord had come to "build" His "Church";[5] He had come to found a kingdom, to fulfil all that was typified within the narrow fold of the Jewish Church, and then open it to all nations. The Church that had been national was to be transformed, and to become Catholic. Hence the Incarnate Word was prophesied as being "a Light to lighten the Gentiles," as well as "the glory of Thy people Israel."[6] The work of the true David in preparing for the building of His Temple was, in one sense, a "finished work." He had chosen His Divine and human natures as the "Rock" upon which the twelve foundation stones of His Church should rest secure. The Body of His Church was formed, but He had not yet breathed into it the breath of life.

In this sense His work was not finished, so that

[1] St. John xvii. 4. [2] St. John xix. 30. [3] St. Matt. xx. 28.
[4] Rom. iv. 25. [5] St. Matt. xvi. 18. [6] St. Luke ii. 32.

the writer of the Book of the Acts speaks of "all that Jesus *began* both to do and teach."[1] All the work, however, that He intended to do on earth was accomplished. That which He had yet to do could only be done after He had returned to heaven. The "finished work" He had done Himself; the work that remained was to be done by His Spirit working through His representatives. His Church was to continue His teaching and His work; she had not another message of her own to bring to the world, but His teaching was to be proclaimed through her lips to "all nations." The kingdom was prepared; the King must, however, ascend His royal throne before He can send out His messengers, for they must go "with power" in His Name.

Nothing is more remarkable in the Gospel story than the inability of the Apostles to understand the nature of the kingdom of which our Lord spoke continually. To them—right up to the moment of His Ascension—it always meant an earthly, temporal kingdom; a restoration to Israel of her lost independence.[2] But our Lord's kingdom was "not of this world,"[3] though a portion of it was to be in the world. The King Himself was to pass out of sight into the heavens that He might be "the Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body."[4] The Body was to be but one; and just as the life of the natural, physical body depends on its union with the head, even so God willed it should be in the spiritual Body, that "He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth."[1] St. Paul goes on to say that the Resurrection and the Ascension of our Lord witnessed to the power of God in working out His will—"that ye may know . . . what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He hath wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all."[2]

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[1] Acts i. 1. [2] Acts i. 6. [3] St. John xviii. 36. [4] Eph. i. 22, 23.

By the Fall heaven had been closed; the souls of the holy dead waited, shut out of heaven, in the state spoken of as "Abraham's Bosom."[3] The Passion merited the opening again of "the kingdom of heaven to all believers."[4] The Ascension witnessed the entrance of the Second Adam into Paradise, and the purpose of this entry was revealed in the words "I go to prepare a place for you."[5] From the moment of the Ascension heaven was open to man, and Christ, as "the firstfruits"[6] of the new humanity, was to take His

[1] Eph. i. 10.
[2] Eph. i. 18–23.
[3] St. Luke xvi. 22.
[4] *Te Deum.*
[5] St. John xiv. 2.
[6] 1 Cor. xv. 20.

place at the right hand of the Majesty on high, as the Head of that mystical Body into which the members were to be incorporated on earth. The Church was to be set up on earth; but, like the ladder seen by Jacob, it was to be a way leading men up to heaven, and the means by which supernatural graces should descend from God to succour and defend the Church on earth.

"Behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it."[1]

1. It was therefore, in the first place, "expedient" that our Lord should depart, in order that the Head should be in the highest place, at the right hand of God. "The Word was made Flesh,"[2] and in this way the ladder was "set up on the earth"; "He ascended into heaven," and therefore—"By a new and *living way*, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh," we have "boldness to enter into the holiest by the Blood of Jesus."[3]

Hence it is said of the ladder, "the top of it reached to heaven . . . and, behold, the Lord stood above it," sending forth His Holy Spirit, and His "ministering spirits,"[4] to gather together "all nations" into the new covenant with Himself. To Jacob it had been said, "The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."[1] These promises were in their highest sense fulfilled in Christ. In His Ascension, He is brought again to His own land, and in His return He brings His people with Him, and opens up the land "to all believers." "When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers," is the witness of the Church in the *Te Deum* to the reopening of Paradise.

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[1] Gen. xxviii. 12.

[2] St. John i. 14.

[3] Heb. x. 19, 20.

[4] Heb. i. 14.

2. It was, again, expedient that our Lord should depart from the world in His visible presence, because by the Resurrection He had entered into the spiritual state of body, that belongs to the life of the world to come, and not to this world. His body had been "sown in weakness," and was now "raised in power."[2] He had put on immortality, and we gather that this change had hindered those who were still "subject to death"[3] from immediately recognising their Lord, over Whom henceforth "death hath no more dominion."[4] Death, we must remember, never had dominion over Jesus Christ as it has over fallen man. The "power

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[1] Gen. xxviii. 13–15.
[2] 1 Cor. xv. 43.
[3] Heb. ii. 15.
[4] Rom. vi. 9.

of death"[1] to touch the Life of the world was given by our Lord's own will for a season. It was needful that He should remain on earth long enough to convince His Apostles of the reality of the Resurrection, and give them the instruction they needed "concerning the kingdom of God."[2] This our Lord did during the forty days between the Resurrection and Ascension, but as soon as He had finished this work of conviction and instruction, it was expedient that the body which belonged to the future life should enter into the enjoyment of that state of bliss, should be glorified, and receive the homage of the hosts of heaven. If it is true that the fall of the rebel angels was due to their refusal to worship the Incarnate Word, it would be most suitable that now the great mystery of His Incarnation had been accomplished, and the powers of evil defeated, the holy angels should welcome the "Lamb as it had been slain."[3]

3. Yet again, the Ascension was expedient in order that the work of the conversion of the world might not be hindered. If our Lord had remained on earth, all who came to the knowledge of His Divine presence, all who believed in Him, would necessarily have desired to see and hear Him. The more the Gospel was preached the more would the world become one vast pilgrimage to the place where Jesus Christ was to be found. This, indeed, is the will of God, but in another way. We are to seek Him and to follow Him, but we

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[1] Heb. ii. 14. [2] Acts i. 3 (R.V.). [3] Rev. v. 6.

may do so since His Ascension without forsaking the work God has given us to do. Our Lord is no nearer to us (apart from the Presence in the Blessed Sacrament) in one place on earth than in another. He is in heaven, we on earth; but if He had remained in the world, it does not require any great flight of the imagination to picture the result. Who would care to hear the disciple when he might listen to the Master? The limitations imposed by the reality of our Lord's body, even in its resurrection state, hindered, as far as we know, His being in more than one place at the same time. Bi-location is read of sometimes in the lives of the Saints, but such stories are accepted or rejected at will, and no such miracle is recorded of our Lord during the forty days.

In very many other ways it is easy to see that, without an incessant atmosphere of miracle, the conversion of the world would have been hindered rather than helped by our Lord's visible presence remaining on earth, whereas the plan He had in His Divine wisdom chosen to follow is the one that we can see is best adapted to the object of the world's evangelisation. The Hierarchy of the Church would multiply and expand to meet the needs of the nations. Everywhere the Apostles and their successors would represent their Master, and teach in His Name and with His authority. Everywhere the same means of grace would be placed within the reach of all, so that all nations under heaven, abiding in the vocation whereunto they were called, would have equal privileges in the kingdom of Christ.

4. Once more, it was expedient that our Lord should depart, that by the withdrawal of His visible presence from one spot on earth, the disciples might be led to know by faith His presence with the Church everywhere, "alway, even unto the end of the world."[1] In going up to heaven, He has not forsaken the earth altogether. On the contrary, His Ascension has developed our faith. "Blessed," said our Lord, "are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."[2] The Ascension, moreover, inspires hope. Because of the presence of the Sacred Humanity in heaven, we are filled with certainty that we ourselves may hope to take possession of the "place" that our Lord has said He has gone "to prepare" for us. His desire is that where He is, there we may be also, and what God wills conditionally on our co-operation, we may well believe shall be ours if we are "workers together with Him."[3]

It is written in the Book of Micah, "Their king shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them."[4] The Good Shepherd leads the way to the eternal Fold, the sheep hear His voice and follow Him.

The Ascension not only fosters faith and hope, but also the love of heavenly things. "Seek," writes St. Paul, "those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above."[1] Our Lord Himself said, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also";[2] and St. Peter, writing many years afterwards, tells of the affection of the Church for the unseen, ascended Christ: "Whom having not seen, ye love; in Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."[3]

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[1] St. Matt. xxviii. 20.

[2] St. John xx. 29.

[3] 2 Cor. vi. 1.

[4] Micah ii. 13.

And because "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost,"[4] it was expedient for us that our Lord should go away, for He said, "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you."[5] The Ascension was to mark the acceptance of the Sacrifice of the Cross, and to be its solemn presentation before the Father. Then from the Father and the Son would go forth the Eternal Spirit to make that Sacrifice effectual to the Church and each of her children.

I.

In the assumption of Elijah we have a type of the Ascension of our Lord. Elijah was taken up into heaven "by a whirlwind,"[6] with "a chariot of fire, and horses of fire."[7] The whirlwind represents the power of God; the prophet Nahum writes, "The Lord is . . . great in power . . . the Lord hath His way in the

[1] Col. iii. 1, 2.
[2] St. Matt. vi. 21.
[3] 1 St. Peter i. 8, 9.
[4] Rom. v. 5.
[5] St. John xvi. 7.
[6] 2 Kings ii. 11.
[7] 2 Kings ii. 11.

whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of His feet."[1] We know also from other passages of Holy Scripture that horses and chariots of fire represent the mighty Angels of God, who encamp round about His people to succour and defend them.

Thus, when Elisha was shut up in Dothan, and hemmed in by hostile bands, his servant was afraid; but Elisha said, "Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray Thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw; and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."[2]

The psalmist writes "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: and the Lord is among them, as in the holy place of Sinai,"[3] and these words are connected immediately with others that speak of the Ascension, "Thou art gone up on high, Thou hast led captivity captive."[4]

In the Book of the Prophet Zechariah[5] we read of these mysterious "horses" as representing "the four spirits of the heavens"—or, as it might be translated, "the four winds"—words that recall others in the Psalms, when God is spoken of as He Who "maketh the clouds His chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind. He maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flaming fire."[6]

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[1] Nahum i. 3.
[2] 2 Kings vi. 16, 17.
[3] Ps. lxviii. 17.
[4] Ps. lxviii. 18.
[5] Zech. i. 8; vi. 2, 3.
[6] Ps. civ. 3, 4.

Elijah, then, was taken up, not by his own power, but by the ministry of Angels. Jesus Christ, on the contrary, ascended by His own might; accompanied indeed by the hosts of heaven, but needing no support from them. As the Apostles watched, "a cloud received Him out of their sight,"[1] for "the clouds are the dust of His feet." Elijah, before his assumption, smote the waters of Jordan with his mantle, "and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two [Elijah and Elisha] went over on dry ground."[2] Because the river Jordan lay between the people of God and the promised land, it fitly became a figure of death—the dark river that must be crossed by all who would enter the heavenly Canaan.

"There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign;
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.
There everlasting spring abides,
And never-withering flowers;
Death, like a narrow stream, divides
That heavenly land from ours.

"Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood
Stand dressed in living green,
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
While Jordan rolled between.
But timorous mortals start and shrink
To cross the narrow sea,
And linger shivering on the brink,
And fear to launch away.

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[1] Acts i. 9.

[2] 2 Kings ii. 8.

"Oh, could we make our doubts remove,
Those gloomy doubts that rise,
And see our Canaan that we love
With unbeclouded eyes:
Could we but stand where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er,
Not Jordan's stream, nor death's dark flood,
Should fright us from that shore."

Now one of the effects of our Lord's passing "through the waters"[1] was that He opened a way through death to the land of promise. His entry into Hades brought liberty and light to the Patriarchs and Prophets who had been awaiting His coming. The feet of the great High Priest, Himself the "Ark of the Covenant," were no sooner "come unto Jordan, and . . . dipped in the brim of the water," than "the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam." And because *He* "stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan,"[2] therefore all the true Israelites have the passage made plain to them. The true Elijah has smitten the waters; they part asunder, that with Him the disciple may not fear nor doubt in the crossing of the river. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee." The mantle of Elijah—the "fine linen, clean and white," which is "the righteousness of saints"[3]—may represent the merits of our Lord, and the outward, sacramental system by which those merits are conveyed to His Church. It is the Divine work of the Spirit of God to convey through outward signs the pardon of the Precious Blood, in which our robes are to be washed white, so that the disciple may be clothed in the righteousness of the Master.

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[1] Isa. xliii. 2. [2] Joshua iii. 15–17. [3] Rev. xix. 8.

Elijah offered to grant Elisha whatever request he made if he were present when he was parted from him. "Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so."[1] Even so our Divine Master spoke to His Apostles: "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My Name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."[2] We are not told that the Apostles asked for a double portion of their Master's Spirit; but our Lord knew their need, though they were ignorant of it, for He said, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you."[3] He gave "a double portion," inasmuch as He promised that, after they were endued "with power from on high,"[4] they should perform even greater works than He had done. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name, that will I do, that the

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[1] 2 Kings ii. 9, 10.

[2] St. John xvi. 24.

[3] St. John xvi. 7.

[4] St. Luke xxiv. 49.

Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in My Name, I will do it."[1]

So also, our Lord's repeated command to "watch" exceeded in its meaning the watchfulness that Elijah made a condition in the promise to Elisha. He "commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of Me."[2] After Elijah had promised to grant the prayer of Elisha if so be that he beheld his assumption, "it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces. He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan."[3]

Thus Elisha went forth to his work, with the spirit of his master resting upon him.

The forty days of the resurrection life of our Lord on earth drew to a close. Jesus took His Apostles and led them out of the city towards Bethany, to the top of the Mount of Olives. It was there that His Agony, the bitter firstfruits of His Passion, had been undergone: it was there that He was to leave the earth, and enter into His glory above, and it was in full view of the city which had crucified Him, and which still contained His tomb, and refused to acknowledge His triumph. All the Apostles and numerous other disciples were present, and they put the question to their Master, "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" He answered, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power."[1] We can see behind the question of the Apostles the last remnants of those dreams of Jewish dominion, which were about to be dispelled by the effulgence of the Spirit; and we see, in the reply of Jesus, the last effort to turn their thoughts towards this Spirit, Whose docile and invincible instruments they were to become. "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."[2] These were His last words. He raised His hands, and blessed His Apostles, and while He was blessing them, they saw Him parted from them, and carried up into heaven: "and a cloud received Him out of their sight."[3]

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[1] St. John xiv. 12–14. [2] Acts i. 4. [3] 2 Kings ii. 11–13.

Henceforward heaven is opened, and the kingdom of God established. The triumph of Jesus is begun; He leaves the earth only that He may free it from the bonds of evil, and may save it. He has "overcome the world."[4]

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[1] Acts i. 7. [2] Acts i. 8. [3] Acts i. 9. [4] St. John xvi. 33.

II.

"*He lifted up His hands, and blessed them.*" Those sacred hands were scarred with the marks of the nails. He would have us understand that all blessing has been merited by His death. The hands were lifted first upon the Cross to draw all men unto Him; then, filled with the infinite merits of that Passion, these same holy hands are raised in that final benediction as He ascends to His throne of glory. From the heart of His ransomed flock there ascends ever to heaven the grateful praise of His Church: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."[1]

"*He lifted up His hands and blessed them.*" What words did He use? or did He bless them as He parted from them with the sacred sign that shall be in the heavens, when He so comes, "in like manner"[2] as He went? Did He leave the sign of the Cross to be the sign of all blessings coming from the pierced hands? We do not know; though we know that sign became the token of fellowship with Christ; and that under that sign we have all been placed when the Precious Blood first brought the mantle of our Elijah to clothe our sin-stained souls, and fill us with all blessings. I "sign thee with the sign of the Cross" accompanies the first blessing of the Christian life, even as the same sacred sign should be the last conscious movement of dying hands, that clasp themselves around the "Rock of Ages" as the stream of death hurries them away. In the hour of dying the Cross and Passion is the one hope of the soul.

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[1] Eph. i. 3.

[2] Acts i. 11.

"Nothing in my hands I bring,
Simply to Thy Cross I cling."

The sacred sign is the sight we would pray to see with our last glance on earth.

"Hold Thou Thy Cross before my closing eyes,
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies."

And that sign of our redemption is the one we hope may mark our last earthly resting-place in the quiet churchyard "until the day break, and the shadows flee away."[1]

In the great and terrible day of the Lord that sign will meet our eyes: "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven," and we "shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."[2] "A cloud received Him out of their sight" while His hands were raised in blessing—the clouds which will disclose Him when He comes again to judge both the quick and the dead.

Will He come to us with those hands still raised in blessing? God grant it—"Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Amen.

[1] Cant. ii. 17.

[2] St. Matt. xxiv. 30.

IX.

SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION

Jesus Christ our Advocate

Prophecy

"He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." (Isa. liii. 12.)

Jesus Christ

"I go unto the Father. . . . I will pray the Father."
(St. John xiv. 28, 16.)

The Soul

"I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause." (Job v. 8.)

"Give sentence with me, O God, and defend my cause."
(Ps. xliii. 1.)

IX.

Jesus Christ our Advocate

IN the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans St. Paul is trying to bring home to the Church the great security of those who are "in Christ." For them there is "no condemnation." They may suffer, but hope never deserts them, for God Himself is on their side, and consequently it matters not who or what may attack them. No created power can separate the elect from the love of God.

St. Paul sketches the outline of God's scheme for the salvation of His people. Each Person of the Blessed Trinity shares in this work. The love of the Father is shown in that "whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son. . . . Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified."[1] But He did more than this. God "spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all."[2] God is clearly on our side. He is "for us, who can be against us?"[3] God, Who has given Himself in His Son, will not be likely to refuse lesser gifts; "shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"[1] "Who," St. Paul asks, "shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" Not the Father, for it is He "that justifieth";[2] not the Holy Spirit, for He "helpeth our infirmities," and "maketh intercession," not against us, but "for us";[3] not Christ, for "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, Who is even at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us."[4] If then God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—be for us, "who can be against us?" The Creator clearly will not undo His own work; the creature cannot. "I am persuaded," St. Paul concludes, "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."[5]

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[1] Rom. viii. 29, 30.

[2] Rom. viii. 32.

[3] Rom. viii. 31.

I.

Our Lord's office as Advocate, Intercessor, and Mediator is so important that it will be well to consider it carefully. In several passages of Holy Scripture this mediatorial work of the ascended Lord is dwelt upon. St. Paul declares that Christ "maketh intercession for us";[6] the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews asserts that "Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us";[1] and again, "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."[2]

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[1] Rom. viii. 32.
[2] Rom. viii. 33.
[3] Rom. viii. 26.
[4] Rom. viii. 34.
[5] Rom. viii. 38, 39.
[6] Rom. viii. 34.

St. John writes, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous";[3] and St. Paul, in another Epistle, tells us that "there is one mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus";[4] and in the Epistle to the Hebrews again we read, "He is the mediator of a better covenant";[5] "He is the mediator of the new testament."[6]

We have to ask, What meaning does St. Paul attach to these words—Advocate, Intercessor, Mediator—as applied to our Lord? We are accustomed to take them as representing a vocal act of intercession or prayer. We should usually understand by an "advocate" one who defends, vindicates, or espouses a cause on behalf of another; by an "intercessor" we mean much the same as we understand by "advocate," except that the word seems to imply that some offence has been committed by the one for whom intercession is made; and the title "mediator" implies the work of propitiation and intercession undertaken by a third person for the reconciliation of those at variance.

It is not until we turn back to the past and ask what these words implied at the date when they were used by the writers of the New Testament, that we understand how appropriately they are applied to our Lord. As the word Advocate includes in its meaning the idea represented by the other two titles—Mediator and Intercessor—it will be sufficient to consider the meaning of that word in some detail. The Greek word used by St. John for advocate is παράκλητος—a word uniformly rendered in Latin by *advocatum*, and in English by advocate.

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[1] Heb. ix. 24.
[2] Heb. vii. 25.
[3] 1 St. John ii. 1.
[4] 1 Tim. ii. 5.
[5] Heb. viii. 6.
[6] Heb. ix. 15; xii. 24.

This rendering, Dr. Westcott says, "is unquestionably correct." The Greek Fathers, however, give the word παράκλητος the same sense as in the Gospels—comforter—consoler. When our Lord speaks of "another Comforter"—Paraclete[1]—He is promising the disciples the presence of the Holy Spirit. St. Augustine gives us the true meaning of the word "advocate" as used here by St. John, when he applies to it the legal significance of antiquity; "If a man in this life commits his cause to a skilful pleader and is saved, shalt thou perish if thou entrustest thyself to the Word?" A παράκλητος was one called to the side[1] of another to take his part, to advocate his cause. The word as used in the Epistle of St. John suggests then in the first place that the advocacy of Christ is sought for by the Christian, and it is especially needed on account of sin. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father." But the word "advocate," as it is used now, hardly represents all that is implied by the Greek word.

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[1] From παρακαλέω—called to one's aid.

The office of advocate grew out of the older institution of patronage. The word "advocate," it is said, occurs only once in the singular in the pages of Cicero, and when used in the plural[1] it was generally understood at that time of the body of friends who stood by a litigant in a great cause to give him support in any shape or form that he needed.

The orator who then appeared in the *comitia* or before a judge was almost invariably called "patron," though the name of "client" was not so commonly given to the litigant whom he represented. But at a later period, when the bar had become a profession, *advocati* was usually the word employed to designate the pleaders as a professional class of men, each individual advocate being still spoken of as a patron in reference to the litigant with whose interests he was entrusted.

Our present use of the word "client," as one for whom the services of a lawyer are engaged, carries us back to the ancient institution of clientage. Until the reforms of Servius Tullius, the only Romans who were properly called citizens were the members of the patrician houses; they alone could participate in the solemnities of the national religion, take part in the government and defence of the state, hold property, and enjoy the protection of the laws.

But alongside of them was a gradually increasing non-citizen population composed of slaves and clients.

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[1] *Advocati.*

Some historians class among the latter, as "clients of the state," those vanquished communities which, having made an unconditional submission, were allowed to retain a quasi-corporate existence under the protection of Rome.

But the name "client," derived from *cluere*, κλύειν, "to obey," was common before Rome had made any conquests, and was usually applied to the individuals who had attached themselves, in a condition of dependence, to the heads of patrician houses as their patrons, in order to secure thereby a *de facto* freedom.

The relationship was sought by the client, and accepted by the patron. The tie was a very intimate one, imposing upon the patron duties of the most sacred kind.

He was bound (1) to provide his client with the necessaries of life; and it was a common practice to make him a grant, during the pleasure of the patron, of a small plot of ground to cultivate on his own account. Further he had (2) to advise him in all his affairs; (3) to represent him in any transactions with a third party in which, as a non-citizen,[1] he could not act with effect; and above all things (4) to stand by him, or rather be his substitute, in any litigation in which he might become involved.

The client in return had not only generally (1) to render to his patron the respect and obedience due from a dependant, but also (2) to furnish any assistance that his patron required. Neither patron nor client might give evidence against the other.

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[1] Eph. ii. 19.

The client was regarded as a minor member of his patron's *gens*, or clan; he was (3) entitled to assist in its religious observances, and bound to contribute to the cost of them; he had (4) to follow his patron to battle; he was subject to the jurisdiction and discipline of the clan, and was entitled to burial in its common sepulchre.

II.

The fall of man involved a separation from God, and a loss of heavenly citizenship.

By the Incarnation God has restored the human race through the mediation of His Son Jesus Christ, Who has become the Advocate or Patron of all who claim His protection and call Him to their side. By Holy Baptism we are taken out of the state of non-citizens and made "fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God"; as children of the one family we have access to the Father, but mortal sin separates from God, and temporarily places us outside the kingdom of grace.

We are not, however, forsaken by our Patron. We have as sinners no right of our own to treat with God, but "if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father," we have One Who will make intercession for us, One Who, as the Mediator of the new covenant by which God and man are reunited, will represent on our behalf the finished work of His atonement. He will "appear in the presence of God for us"[1] to transact the business which we, "alienated from the life of God" by sin, have no right to transact for ourselves.

Our Lord does not merely pray for us as we pray one for another, or as the Saints pray for us. His "intercession" is the presentation of Himself before the Father as the Lamb slain—"He is the propitiation for our sins"; He *is*, not He *was*. The sacrifice once offered is ceaselessly represented and pleaded before the throne of God. By it we are reconciled, by the Precious Blood we are cleansed, and the union of our life with the life of God is accomplished by our incorporation into Christ. We are "members of Christ," so that we are indeed represented before God; we are "in Him, and He in us."

If we take, one by one, the duties of the patron or advocate towards his clients, we shall see how they are performed by Jesus Christ on our behalf, as His clients.

(1) Has not our Advocate provided for us the necessaries of our spiritual life? He has taken us out of the state of bondage and made us citizens "of no mean city,"[2] but of the Jerusalem which is above and which is free. Once "ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and

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[1] Heb. ix. 24.

[2] Acts xxi. 39.

without God in the world: but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, Who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God."[1]

Having taken us into the family of God, our Patron bestows upon us for clothing the "white robe"[2] of His righteousness and merits; for our food He gives us the Bread of life; if we fall sick He becomes not only our Advocate but our Physician. He gives us a plot of land—the garden of the soul—to cultivate; He fertilises this garden by the dew of His Spirit so that it may produce a twelvefold fruit.

(2) Are we in doubt or difficulty? We have an Advocate Who will advise us in all our perplexities—"When they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak."[3]

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[1] Eph. ii. 12–19. [2] Rev. vi. 11. [3] St. Matt. x. 19.

(3) Have we felt our separation from God after some sin, and our unworthiness to appear before Him? If so we have "a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God."[1] *He* has a right as a Son in "heavenly places," but He has also another right as the firstfruits of the human race, as the first-begotten from the dead, to represent those whom He has redeemed from sin and death after bearing their infirmities. He can sympathise with sinners—"For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."[2]

Only we must become His clients—those who obey. "He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him."[3]

(4) Jesus Christ was and is our substitute in the sense that He has satisfied for us the justice of God. Man could die for his own sins, but he could neither abolish sin nor conquer death.

The union of the Divine and human natures in the Person of the Son of God enabled our Lord to suffer as man, and conquer as God.

But His substitution is only effectual to those who abide in Him. His sacrifice has merited the power by which man can have union with God; it remains for man to obey, and use the means ordained to enable him to abide in Christ.

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[1] Heb. iv. 14. [2] Heb. iv. 15, 16. [3] Heb. v. 9.

Thus it is then that Jesus Christ represents mankind before the throne of God, and transacts the great work of salvation for men. Moreover in old time the advocate might never bear witness against the client.

Even so now St. Paul implies the same impossibility when he asks, "Who is he that condemneth?" It cannot be Christ—our Advocate—for it is Christ who "maketh intercession for us."

We see then that our Lord, in all these ways, abundantly fulfils His office as our Advocate with the Father.

III.

We have now to see how far the obligations of the client of old time are still binding on us as the clients of Jesus Christ—our Advocate.

(1) In the first place we have to realise our *need* of an Advocate—that we are by nature born in sin—children of wrath; that it can only be by "adoption and grace" that we can become inheritors of the kingdom of heaven.

We have to "call to our side" the Advocate, and we shall not do this unless we feel the need of His help. "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."[1]

Having realised our need, and having been enrolled in our baptism as children of God, through Jesus Christ, we are in no doubt that our Advocate will accept us. He has promised—"Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."[2] Jesus Christ has, however, made certain conditions if we desire to abide under His protecting care. He is "the mediator of the new covenant"[3]—and a covenant is not a one-sided offer of an alliance, but an agreement between those who are each concerned to fulfil the stated conditions. Now our Lord has clearly made obedience to His commandments the condition of His advocacy of our cause. "If ye love Me, keep My commandments."[4] "He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me."[5] Wilful sin is the only power that can separate the baptised soul from God, and "sin is the transgression of the law"[6] of love or charity. It is love that will make formal disobedience of the wishes of the Beloved almost impossible—and so our Lord has said, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." It is true that we sin—and "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves."[7] And yet not every sin is "unto death,"[8] but only such sin as is wilful in a serious matter. The reason is that only such a deliberate act is destructive of the grace of God in the soul. It is not so much the action as the motive that determines the moral guilt. The will must turn from God and choose evil before a grave sin can be committed.

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[1] Rev. iii. 17, 18.
[2] St. John vi. 37.
[3] Heb. xii. 24.
[4] St. John xiv. 15.
[5] St. John xiv. 21.
[6] 1 St. John iii. 4.
[7] 1 St. John i. 8.
[8] 1 St. John v. 17.

Hence mortal sin is not necessarily the *material* breaking of even the gravest commandment, but the *formal*—*i.e.* the wilful and deliberate—doing of any act that is thought to be seriously offensive to God. The difference between material and formal sin is a point of immense importance. It at once disposes of all the difficulties raised by those who say God is unjust to some, since they who are educated in squalor and vice have more temptations and less chance of overcoming evil, than they who are shielded and protected from their birth to the grave.

But a man may lie and steal, and be guilty of all uncleanness, and yet never perhaps commit a formal sin ; at the same time such a case would be improbable, since the conscience and reason would usually be sufficient to warn men against most of such actions.

Every man is judged according to his works, but his works are qualified by the good or bad motives that have inspired them.

It is for this reason that one man *cannot* judge the conscience of another. Man sees the outward act, and, perhaps, praises or condemns. But God, Who sees the heart, knows just how far that action, which we praise or blame, is worthy of approval or condemnation. " Therefore," says the Apostle, "judge nothing before the time";[1] "to his own Master he standeth or falleth."[2] It is for this reason also that St. Paul magnifies the virtue of charity, or love, because love alone indicates the value of an action. A man who loves his friend will not lightly or wilfully displease him, therefore "love is the fulfilling of the law."[3] Without love there may be a servile obedience, but the instinct of obedience is wanting where there is not love. Love is harmony, peace. Sin is sinful because it is the opposite of love—it is discord, strife. God is love, and sin is opposed to God; sin is a name for some contradiction of the essential character of God. A client, in the natural order, is "one who obeys," and a client of Jesus Christ is therefore one who loves, and so keeps the commandments of the Beloved. If, however, through weakness, or instability, or the power of temptation, the client of Jesus Christ momentarily departs from his obedience, he may still have recourse to his Lord: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins."

(2) It might be thought that in the second point—relating to the obligation of the client to assist his advocate—there can be no corresponding duty between the soul and Jesus Christ. There is, however, a very real sense in which the obligation holds good. The work of Jesus Christ is carried on through His Church; He uses human agents. It is our duty in every way, by

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[1] 1 Cor. iv. 5. [2] Rom. xiv. 4. [3] Rom. xiii. 10.

our personal service, by alms, by prayer, to help forward the kingdom of God upon earth. In the person of His poor our Lord has left us also the opportunity of serving Him: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." "For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me."[1] Do we fulfil our part of the new covenant? If not, have we shown ourselves real clients of the Master, Whose advocacy we hope for in our time of need?

(3) This thought of the support we owe to Jesus Christ in His Church on earth leads us on to the next consideration. We are, as children of Jesus Christ, entitled to share in the worship of the Church—the household of God. Do we forsake "the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is"?[2] To the client of old the fact that he was allowed a share in the worship of his patron's family was thought a high privilege. We may well examine ourselves as to the frequency of our own prayers, and our Eucharists, as well as to our fulfilment of the duty of contributing by our alms to the support of the services of the Church.

(4) The client was bound, if need arose, to follow his patron to battle, and fight for him. To the Christian

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[1] St. Matt. xxv. 35, 36, 40.

[2] Heb. x. 25.

the command has long since been given to "fight the good fight,"[1] to be, as soldiers of the King of kings, ever clothed in the supernatural armour that God supplies. Only our warfare is not against flesh and blood, "but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."[2] The ascended Lord does not ask us to fight in our own strength, but He sends to us "another Paraclete" to help our infirmity. "Another," because He Himself is ever helping us by His intercession and advocacy, as the Mediator between God and man. A Paraclete Who strengthens us with the ghostly strength of His own Almighty power. If we die in His service, with Him for our Advocate—we need not fear, for He has hallowed death to be the gate of life; He has given us even more than the privilege of being laid to rest in the shelter of His Church, He allows us to be "buried with Him," so that "through the grave, and gate of death, we may pass to our joyful resurrection."[3]

Our Lord said to His disciples, "It is expedient for you that I go away,"[4] and so He went "unto the Father"; He passed into the heavens"[5] to make intercession for us, to be our Advocate, our Mediator.

If we do not wilfully reject Him, what hostile power dare oppose with any hope of success those whom Jesus Christ protects under the shadow of His Name?

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[1] I Tim. vi. 12.
[2] Eph. vi. 12.
[3] Collect for Easter Even.
[4] St. John xvi. 7.
[5] Heb. iv. 14.

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."[1]

For this we have not only the Apostolic witness, but also the words of Eternal Truth—"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand."[2]

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[1] Rom. viii. 35, 37-39.

[2] St. John x. 27, 28.

PASSAGES FOR READING.

(1) Deut. v. 5. Jesus Christ, of Whom Moses was a type, stands between "the Lord and you," as Advocate. "Our God is a consuming Fire," and His love does not hinder His wrath against the impenitent.

(2) Eph. ii. 13–18. Christ as the Mediator has reconciled God and man. But compare Heb. vi. 4–6, and fear lest you fail to make use of the "plenteous redemption."

(3) Exod. xvii. 8–13. Our Lord—as the great Intercessor—has His hands ever raised to bestow graces upon those who fight the good fight. On the Cross His arms were raised, and He prayed for those who crucified Him.

(4) Acts vii. 54–60. St. Stephen saw his Advocate standing at God's right hand. So we, by faith, are sure that within the veil our Lord is watching us—ready to help us in every time of need.

(5) Num. xvi. 46–48. Aaron the High Priest is a type of the mediatorial office of our great High Priest, Jesus Christ. (Heb. v. 1–5.) His merits, represented by the incense, "made an atonement for the people" on Calvary.

(6) St. Luke xxiii. 34; Isa. liii. 12. The High Priest intercedes while He offers Himself as a Sacrifice on the Altar of the Cross.

"They know not what they do" will absolve at the last day many who had little opportunity; but can *we* claim shelter under this intercession?

Liturgical Notes at Pentecost

WHIT SUNDAY is the name commonly given to Pentecost in England. The word is probably derived from the Anglo-Saxon "Hwita Sunnandaeg," and means "White Sunday." The name most likely refers to the white baptismal robe, Easter and Pentecost being the two great Feasts at which Holy Baptism was especially administered. A form for blessing the Font was provided, and is still kept in the *Missale Romanum*, though custom has abrogated the blessing of the Font at Pentecost, retaining it, however, on Easter Eve. The name "White Sunday" is therefore a sort of equivalent to *Dominica in albis*—or Low Sunday. Pentecost, or the Feast of Weeks, was one of the three great Feasts of the Jewish law. To the Christian Church the day has become sacred, as it was upon the Feast of Pentecost that the Holy Ghost descended miraculously on the Apostles.

It is therefore the Birthday of the Church, as well as the Festival of God the Holy Spirit. It is kept with an octave both in the Roman and Anglican Communions.

The office hymns are:—

Vespers and Terce. *Veni, Creator Spiritus.*
"Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire."—*A. and M.*, 157.

Matins. *Jam Christus astra ascenderet.*
"Above the starry spheres."—*A. and M.*, 152.

Lauds. *Beata nobis gaudia.*
"Joy! because the circling year."—*A. and M.*, 153.

Sequence (sung between Epistle and Gospel at the Solemn Eucharist). *Veni, Sancte Spiritus.*
"Come, Thou Holy Spirit, come."—*A. and M.*, 156.

X.

WHIT SUNDAY

The Building of the Temple

Type

"And David said, . . . The house that is to be builded for the Lord must be exceeding magnifical, of fame and of glory throughout all countries: I will therefore now make preparation for it. So David prepared abundantly before his death."

And God said—"Solomon thy son, he shall build My house and My courts; for I have chosen him to be My son, and I will be his Father. Moreover I will establish his kingdom for ever."

"Thus all the work that Solomon made for the house of the Lord was finished. . . . Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven; . . . and the glory of the Lord filled the house." (1 Chron. xxii. 5; xxviii. 6, 7; 2 Chron. v. 1; vii. 1.)

Jesus Christ

"Upon this rock I will build My Church." (St. Matt. xvi. 18.)

"Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you."
(St. John xv. 16.)

The Soul

"Now, my God, let, I beseech Thee, Thine eyes be open, and let Thine ears be attent unto the prayer that is made in this place." (2 Chron. vi. 40.)

X.

The Building of the Temple

DAVID'S life is drawing towards its end. Before he departs he has the great desire "to build an house unto the Name of the Lord." "And the Lord said unto David, . . . Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto My Name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart."[1] Nevertheless, because "thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build an house unto My Name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in My sight. Behold, a son shall be born unto thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon (Peaceable), and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days. He shall build an house for My Name; and he shall be My son, and I will be his Father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever."[2]

In other words, David should, in Solomon his son, accomplish all the work he had himself begun in the preparation of the materials for the building of the

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[1] 1 Kings viii. 18.

[2] 1 Chron. xxii. 8-10.

Temple. His kingly line should be continued in a new and more glorious life. Hitherto a man of war, in Solomon David should reign as "a man of rest." Hitherto engaged in establishing his kingdom, hereafter in Solomon his throne should be glorious and secure, established for ever.

Then when the king of peace reigns in Jerusalem the city of peace, the house that is to be builded for the Lord, "exceeding magnifical, of fame and of glory throughout all countries," shall rise up toward heaven.

When David had received this message from God, we read that he "assembled all the princes of Israel, the princes of the tribes, and the captains of the companies that ministered to the king by course, and the captains over the thousands, and captains over the hundreds, and the stewards over all the substance and possession of the king, and of his sons, with the officers, and with the mighty men, and with all the valiant men, unto Jerusalem."[1] Then, with these his chief men around him, David tells them of his desire to build the Temple, and the reason why he may not do it. Solomon his son shall build the house of God, but he has prepared the materials out of which the Temple shall be constructed: he has arranged the plans even to the minutest details, and ordered the courses of the priests and of the Levites in all the service of the house of God.

After David has spoken of all this, we read:

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[1] 1 Chron. xxviii. 1.

"Furthermore David the king said unto all the congregation, Solomon my son, whom alone God hath chosen, is yet young and tender, and the work is great: for the palace is not for man, but for the Lord God. Now I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God the gold for things to be made of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and the brass for things of brass, the iron for things of iron, and wood for things of wood; onyx stones, and stones to be set, glistering stones, and of divers colours, and all manner of precious stones, and marble stones in abundance. Moreover, because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, which I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house, even three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the houses withal: the gold for things of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and for all manner of work to be made by the hands of artificers."[1] Then the king, after showing to his people all that he himself has done, and all the vast treasure he has stored up for the building of the Temple, turns to the assembled multitude and asks, "Who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?"[2] or—as it is more forcibly translated in the Revised Version—"Who then offereth willingly to consecrate himself this day unto the Lord?" Who is willing to give his time, his substance, his life if need be, to this great work of providing for the building of the house of God? Who will "fill his hand" (see margin) with treasure, and offer it to God?

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[1] 1 Chron. xxix. 1–5.

[2] 1 Chron. xxix. 5.

To this invitation there was a ready response; we are told that "the chief of the fathers and princes of the tribes of Israel, and the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the rulers of the king's work, offered willingly, and gave for the service of the house of God of gold five thousand talents and ten thousand drams, and of silver ten thousand talents, and of brass eighteen thousand talents, and one hundred thousand talents of iron. And they with whom precious stones were found gave them to the treasure of the house of the Lord. . . . Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy."[1]

I.

Before we go further let us notice, first of all, how it came about that the people "offered willingly."

(1) The generosity of the people was aroused by the sight of all that David himself had done in preparation for the building of the Temple. They knew of his battles, they knew of his victories, but it was the sight of this treasure accumulated by his long-continued zeal

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[1] 1 Chron. xxix. 6–9.

for the glory of God—the sight of the riches he had heaped up, not for himself, but for the house of the Lord—that fired their enthusiasm, and made them desire to give all that they could of their service and of their substance to help in the glorious work. The self-denial of their king, his faith and his zeal, inspired the people with the strong wish to follow his example.

(2) The desire, however, was not in itself enough. The king might have no need of their humble gifts. Who were they that they should dare to offer a mere handful of treasure to the immense store that the king had himself of his "own proper good" set aside for the purpose, over and above all that he had prepared for the holy house?

It remained therefore for David himself to ask: "Who then offereth willingly to consecrate himself this day unto the Lord?" before the people could actually offer "willingly with perfect heart unto the Lord."

The invitation to contribute might have met with a response even if David had not been able to strengthen it by his own example; but, as it was, it came with a twofold power, for example is more persuasive than words.

(3) Notice, too, that when David in recounting the treasures he has collected for the beautifying of the future Temple mentions "precious stones," but to one stone only is a name given—"onyx stones"—the rest are simply called "stones to be set, glistering stones and of divers colours, and all manner of precious stones."

Doubtless these precious stones used in building the earthly Temple at Jerusalem were the same as those mentioned in the Revelation of St. John, as the foundations of the heavenly City of Peace—the city "whose builder and maker is God."[1] There is "no temple therein,"[2] because the whole of that land is set apart for the service of God, but we read: "The foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones."[3] Then the names of the twelve precious foundation stones are given, and among them is the sardonyx—the most beautiful of the many varieties of the onyx stone; and in these twelve foundation stones of the heavenly city are "the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."[4]

In the Book of Exodus we are told that the same precious stones were set in the "breastplate of judgment," which was worn over the heart of the High Priest.[5] In these stones were "the names, of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, ... according to the twelve tribes."[6]

The more we read our Bible the more certain we become that nothing recorded there is without significance. There is a hidden meaning in most of the facts written therein "for our learning."[7] It is therefore probable that it is not by accident, nor without design, that the onyx is particularly named among the precious stones that the people offered willingly for the Temple.

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[1] Heb. xi. 10.
[2] Rev. xxi. 22.
[3] Rev. xxi. 19.
[4] Rev. xxi. 14.
[5] Exod. xxviii. 29.
[6] Exod. xxviii. 21.
[7] Rom. xv. 4.

"Whenever the onyx simply is spoken of in the present day, the black stone striped with white is the kind of onyx indicated. Ours, however, can hardly be otherwise than a degenerate form of a most beautiful stone, 'black but comely,' which Job called 'the precious onyx.'[1] With regard to the onyx which was specially spoken of as being in the Garden of Eden (Gen. ii. 12), we know not, and cannot expect to know, what it was like as to its exquisite beauty and signification. Probably it was an exceedingly splendid sardonyx (having stripes of blood-red and snow-like white), for it was a sardonyx which St. John saw as constituting one of the foundations of the heavenly Jerusalem. . . . Our well-known onyx stones (looking like little black clouds with silver linings) have always been the symbols of death, and the jewels of mourning. Very appropriately they might be termed 'stones of darkness, and the shadow of death.'[2]"[3] The onyx then in its more common form symbolises death.

Is it without significance that the name of Manasseh was that engraved upon the onyx stone in the breastplate of the High Priest?

Manasseh signifies "that is forgotten," or "that makes forget." He was Joseph's elder son, by an Egyptian mother, and at his birth it is recorded that "Joseph called the name of his firstborn Manasseh: For God, said he, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house."[1]

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[1] Job xxviii. 16.

[2] Job xxviii. 3.

[3] *Precious Stones of the Bible*, pp. 167, 168.

Egypt is, in Holy Scripture, the land of death, and was especially noted as the land that treasured death, and, so to speak, immortalised mortality. The inheritance of Manasseh in Canaan was divided into two portions, and separated by the river Jordan. The eastern portion was given by Moses, the western by Joshua. Again, may we not see a deeper meaning in this than that which lies on the surface? Jordan is another figure of death; the land given by Moses signifies the covenant of works—representing this life in which we "work out our salvation"; the western land over Jordan, given by Joshua, is the land in which we forget the trials and sorrows of life; it is given to us by the true Joshua; it is the land of the righteousness of Christ. The black in the onyx figures the life here and our death; the white is the colour of the robes that have been washed in the blood of the Lamb. Well then may the black in the onyx that was used in the building of the earthly Temple symbolise its future destruction; and well too is it that, in the heavenly Jerusalem, the sardonyx is the stone used, for in that stone is nothing black, nothing gloomy; but it is of red and white, like two stones firmly united, but in reality absolutely and inseparably one; thus the sardonyx figures the everlasting covenant.

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[1] Gen. xli. 51.

The blood-red sard of the sardonyx is said by some to be derived from the Greek word σάρξ = flesh, on account of its having the colour and appearance of flesh with blood. Fitly is it used in the foundation of the kingdom that is open to men through the Incarnation of the Eternal Word. Fitly also since the Church is builded upon the union of the Divine and human natures of Christ, as upon a most firm rock. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."[1] He is the strong, massive rock-bed upon which the separate foundation stones are builded up, cemented together, and joined to Him by the union of love.

We can then see many reasons why figuratively the onyx may have been specially named in the building of the Temple, and in the heavenly city. And just as Manasseh's name is graven on the stone in the breastplate of the High Priest, so the Apostles whose names are in the twelve foundation stones[2] were called to leave all for Christ—to "forget" their own people, and their father's house.[3] Yet they were not forgotten of God, for our Lord says: "There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time . . . and in the world to come eternal life."[4] Hence the stone which symbolises forgetfulness makes it impossible that they whose names are "in it" shall be forgotten. Even in the black onyx of death the names engraved on the stone are very near to the Heart of the great High Priest; while all who have union with the Incarnate Word (symbolised by the sardonyx) are eventually builded up into "that great city, the holy Jerusalem . . . having the glory of God," whose light is "like unto a stone most precious."[1]

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[1] I Cor. iii. 11.

[2] Rev. xxi. 14.

[3] Ps. xlv. 10.

[4] St. Mark x. 29, 30.

In Jesus Christ are the names of the elect: He is "the Book of life,"[2] the Book not of forgetfulness but of remembrance. They whose names are written therein taste the fulness of joy, because God remembers their "work and labour of love."[3] They forgot their own people and their father's house to follow Christ on earth; now they are rewarded "because the former troubles are forgotten."[4] The onyx of death, of "the land where all things are forgotten,"[5] where "there is no remembrance of former things,"[6] becomes the sardonyx of eternal life in the land that is very far off: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His Name. And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels."[7] It is probably, therefore, not without deep meaning that the onyx is mentioned in the inspired record of the building of the Temple. It must not be overlooked that this stone is named as part of the riches that David had stored up to be used in the building of the house of the Lord: it is not specially named among the offerings of the people. This may signify that the conquest of death, and the grace of eternal life, are not ours by right, but are "the gift of God."[1] The people, then, inspired by the sight of all the riches and goodness of their king, and in response to his own invitation, "offered willingly to the Lord." They consecrated themselves unto the Lord with perfect heart. And yet we read that they were not for a moment unmindful that all they had to offer was itself the gift of God, "for," said the king, "all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee."[2]

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[1] Rev. xxi. 10, 11. [2] Rev. xx. 15. [3] Heb. vi. 10. [4] Isa. lxv. 16.
[5] Ps. lxxxviii. 12. [6] Eccles. i. 11. [7] Mal. iii. 16, 17.

Then again, let us note that the offerings thus freely made were never withdrawn, but the gold, the silver, and the precious stones were by a long and laborious service wrought into that Temple, which grew up so silently and so majestically in the midst of the nations: "The house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building."[3] The work of fashioning the stones was done elsewhere. The hammers and axes are heard in the Church Militant, where with "many a blow and biting sculpture" the "stones elect" are polished and prepared. But these stones are not allowed to be brought into the holy city, the heavenly Jerusalem, till they are meet for the Master's use, perfectly ready for the place He has prepared for them in the spiritual fabric of His kingdom.

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[1] Rom. vi. 23.

[2] 1 Chron. xxix. 14.

[3] 1 Kings vi. 7.

It is written that when David saw his own generosity reflected in the willing gifts of his people, he "rejoiced with great joy."

David's work is now finished, his battles are fought, his enemies subdued, and he can bequeath to his people a kingdom of peace.

"So David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David."[1] "Then Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king . . . and prospered. . . . And the Lord magnified Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed upon him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel."[2] "And Solomon determined to build an house for the Name of the Lord."[3]

In the Books of the Kings and Chronicles we read of the building of this Temple, and how each year, as it passed away, witnessed the advance of the work towards completion. At last, after "seven years,"[4] "all the work that Solomon made for the house of the Lord was finished,"[5] and he dedicated the Temple with solemn rites, with sacrifice and with prayer: and then God gave the sign of acceptance of all that had been done and offered; "when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven . . . and the glory of the Lord filled the house."[1]

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[1] 1 Kings ii. 10.
[2] 1 Chron. xxix. 23, 25.
[3] 2 Chron. ii. 1.
[4] 1 Kings vi. 38.
[5] 2 Chron. v. 1.

II.

David was in many ways a type of Jesus Christ, but seldom is he so clearly the mystical forerunner of our Lord as in this story of the preparation for the building of the Temple at Jerusalem.

Like David, our Lord had in His Heart "to build an house unto the Name of the Lord," and He promised more than once that this Church should be built. One day at Cæsarea Philippi He asked His disciples, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that Thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."[2]

Here our Lord distinctly promised that in the future He would build His Church. St. Peter had acknowledged the Incarnation—the union of the Divine and human natures in Jesus Christ—and this is the rock upon which the Church is to rest. St. Peter, as having first confessed this truth, is also to be one of the foundation stones of the spiritual temple that is to rest upon the sure rock-bed of the Incarnate Word.

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[1] 2 Chron. vii. 1.

[2] St. Matt. xvi. 13–18.

Sometimes the distinction between the foundation stones—the Apostles with St. Peter at their head—and that upon which these stones themselves rest, is lost sight of. The Church is not resting upon any one foundation other than Jesus Christ, but upon Him the foundation stones are laid, and the whole building is constructed. This seems clearly to be the teaching of the collect in the *Missale Romanum* for the Vigil of the Feast of SS. Peter and Paul (June 28th): "Grant, we beseech Thee, O Almighty God, that those whom Thou hast established upon the rock of the apostolic confession may not be shaken by any fears."[1]

Our Lord then "had in His Heart to build" His Church. Throughout His life He stored up the "riches of His grace,"[2] and all His priceless merits for this very work.

For this He chose His twelve Apostles—as precious stones. For this He went about doing good, healing the sick, raising the dead, teaching and instructing the people. No single soul was valueless in His sight: He would have "all men to be saved."[3] The Church He had in His Heart to build was to be the Church of all nations—Catholic. By His Passion and Death He purchased all the kingdoms of the world; He ransomed them. For what purpose? Surely in order that each soul might find its prepared place in the heavenly courts. "They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels."

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[1] "Præsta, quæsumus omnipotens Deus: ut nullis nos permittas perturbationibus concuti, quos in apostolicæ confessionis petra solidasti—Per Dominum."

[2] Eph. i. 7.

[3] 1 Tim. ii. 4.

But still the Church was only prepared for—not actually built—by our Lord in His earthly life. Like David, Jesus Christ had been a great warrior; He fought great battles against the hosts of the enemy, against evil men, and the powers of darkness led by the prince of darkness; He had carried the battle into the very stronghold of death, and led captivity captive; He had "shed much blood upon the earth" in the sight of His Father, and the fact that it was His own Precious Blood made it the more evident how fierce the warfare had been. All that David began to do for the Temple was to be completed by Solomon his son. We have, then, to pass from David as the type of Christ to that other figure of Him given us in Solomon; for in Holy Scripture David and Solomon are both types of the "One Lord" under different aspects.

On the Resurrection morning we sing—

"The strife is o'er, the battle done;
Now is the Victor's triumph won;
O let the song of praise be sung. Alleluia!"

But the Ascension perfected this victory of the Resurrection. It was symbolised by the passing of

David to his rest, and the accession of Solomon to the throne. Fitly, then, when the true David ascended to His royal throne, does the Church sing, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is the King of glory? It is the Lord strong and mighty, even the Lord mighty in battle."[1] Jesus Christ, the Son of David, becomes in His Ascension (like Solomon) a "Man of rest."[2] Of Him more truly than of Solomon could God say, "He shall be My Son, and I will be His Father; and I will establish the throne of His kingdom over Israel for ever. . . . I will give Him rest from all His enemies round about."[3] Our Lord, as the true Solomon, the "Prince of Peace," took possession in His Ascension of the throne of the heavenly Jerusalem, the Vision, the City, of Peace; and the promise that as David He had given, "I will build My Church," as Solomon He now fulfils. Taken in this sense, before His Ascension our Lord (as David) assembled at Jerusalem the princes of His people—the Apostles—and spoke to them of "the things pertaining to the kingdom of God."[4] "He showed unto them His hands and His side"—His wounds, the source of all the treasures of the grace He has stored up in His life on earth for the welfare of His Church. Then He is "received up into heaven," but only that He may, as Solomon, accomplish the work that as David He had prepared for.

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[1] Ps. xxiv. 7 (Evensong, Ascension Day).

[2] 1 Chron. xxii. 9.

[3] 1 Chron. xxii. 9, 10.

[4] Acts i. 3.

Holy Scripture speaks of "all that Jesus began both to do and teach";[1] and in these words the continuity of His work is brought out.

Solomon is said to have built the Temple because it was during his reign that the work was begun and finished, and because he supplied the material needed for the work. Even so Jesus Christ from His heavenly throne "gave the word," and "great was the company of the preachers."[2] He supplied the material for the fabric of His Church in the gifts of His grace and merits. The Apostles, inspired by the goodness of their Master, offered themselves willingly for the work. They gave all they had to Him Who had shown them an example of such great self-sacrifice. It was the sight of His life that led them to desire to follow His example. But this was not enough. It was needful that their Lord should invite them to co-operate with Him. This invitation He gave them in His call to each one—"Follow Me."[3] "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."[4] "If thou wilt be perfect"—if thou wilt with perfect heart consecrate thyself to God—"go and sell that thou hast, ... and come and follow Me."[5]

We know how nobly, how generously, the Apostles responded to this call; how "mightily grew the word of God and prevailed";[6] how "the Lord added daily to the Church such as should be saved";[1] how the stones of the spiritual fabric were with "many a blow and biting sculpture" made ready in the Church Militant for the "prepared place" in the Church Triumphant. We know, too, that all was done by the grace and favour of the King of Peace; that all was fashioned from materials that He Himself supplied, for "it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."[2]

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[1] Acts i. 1.

[2] Ps. lxviii. 11.

[3] St. Matt. ix. 9.

[4] St. Matt. xvi. 24.

[5] St. Matt. xix. 21.

[6] Acts xix. 20.

We must now turn our thoughts again to the Temple of Solomon. There came a day when the Temple was finished as far as its outward structure went. It lacked, however, the indwelling Divine Presence, and consequently it had not the attractive power to draw the people towards itself, as to a centre of spiritual force and blessing. The Temple had to be dedicated—God must take possession of it. In order to obtain this Divine acceptance, Solomon offers the prayer of consecration, that the house he has builded may indeed be the house of God, "that all people of the earth may know Thy Name, and fear Thee."[3] Solomon concludes with the urgent prayer that God will come and dwell in the house that he has built: "Now therefore arise, O Lord God, into Thy resting place, Thou, and the ark of Thy strength: let Thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, and let Thy saints rejoice in goodness. O Lord God, turn not away the face of Thine Anointed: remember the mercies of David Thy servant. Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house."[1]

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[1] Acts ii. 47.
[2] Phil. ii. 13.
[3] 2 Chron. vi. 33.

In this dedication of the Temple we see a type of the descent of the Holy Ghost to take possession of the Church of God on the Day of Pentecost. Our Lord promised many times that He would send the Holy Spirit to dwell in the Church which He had in His Heart to build. "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter."[2] "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you."[3] These promises were fulfilled on the first Whit Sunday, when the Divine Spirit was first given to the Church. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them."[4] It was the Presence of God the Holy Ghost, the "celestial fire,"[5] that was to be the attractive power in the Church of God, "that all people of the earth" might know that "there is none other Name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."[6]

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[1] 2 Chron. vi. 41, 42; vii. 1.

[2] St. John xiv. 16.

[3] St. John xvi. 7.

[4] Acts ii. 1–3.

[5] See *Veni Creator.*

[6] Acts iv. 12.

The Apostles themselves were men quite incapable of accomplishing the great work of building up the Church of God on earth. St. Paul declares that "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence."[1] In this confession that "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above,"[2] we have the apostolic witness to the truth confessed before God in the building of the Temple of Solomon at Jerusalem. "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of Thee, and Thou reignest over all; and in Thine hand is power and might; and in Thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank Thee, and praise Thy glorious Name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee. For we are strangers before Thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding. O Lord our God, all this store that we have prepared to build Thee an house for Thine holy Name cometh of Thine hand, and is all Thine own."[1]

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[1] 1 Cor. i. 27–29.

[2] St. James i. 17.

It was well that men should realise God's hand, both in the building of the old Temple, and in the foundation and building of the Church of God. The world could see only the human builders, but it must be forced to acknowledge that their success came from God; "not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."[2]

Indeed the Fathers often speak of the Holy Spirit as the "Hand of God."[3] In the Latin *Veni Creator* the Holy Spirit is spoken of as "Digitus Paternæ dexteræ"—the "Finger of God's right hand." It is His glorious office to perfect the works of the other Persons of the Blessed Trinity.

III.

It is not only in the foundation and growth of the Church that God fulfils the type of the building of the Temple of Solomon. What He does for the Church He repeats in a certain sense in each soul.

St. Paul writes, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?"[4] God gives us our being, our body and soul. In Baptism and Confirmation He dedicates and takes possession of this temple by the gift of the Holy Spirit. He breathes into our soul the breath of spiritual life; He places within our reach all the treasures of His merits and His grace; nay, more, He gives Himself as our pattern and example, and comes Himself to dwell in our hearts by faith. The Holy Spirit brings to the Church the Eucharistic Presence of Jesus Christ—not merely to be worshipped and adored, but to be received in the mystery of Holy Communion—"Christ in you" is "the hope of glory."[1]

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[1] 1 Chron. xxix. 11–16.

[2] Zech. iv. 6.

[3] See IRENÆUS, *Hær.* iv. *præf.*; HILAR. *De Trin.* vii. 22.

[4] 1 Cor. vi. 19.

But these gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit are meant to elicit our co-operation. We have a will that is free; and God would have us use it to work together with Him in the building up of ourselves in our most holy faith.[2] If He gives Himself to us, it is that we may give ourselves—our soul and body—to Him.

He has come on earth; He has left us the pattern of His life; He has given to us Divine lessons; He has redeemed us by His blood; He has risen from the dead for our justification; He has ascended to prepare a place for us; He has sent to us His Holy Spirit to make us ready for that place; but all is useless unless we, inspired by the sight of all that He has done, *desire* to be conformed to His image and likeness, and accept His invitation to follow the steps of His most holy life.

The full response to this vocation—"Follow Me"—is in the Religious Life; but all are called in some degree to forget their own people and their father's house—to forsake all that hinders the following of their Lord in whatever way they are called to follow Him. All must

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[1] Col. i. 27.

[2] St. Jude 20.

"consecrate" their service to the Lord. It is only those who have had their names engraven in the onyx stone of the Church Militant, whose names will appear in the sardonyx of heaven. "To him that overcometh will I give . . . . a white stone, and in the stone a new name written."[1] A white stone, perhaps, because white is the colour of the righteousness of Christ, and in that country where He is all robes are "made white." The darkness of earth has passed away; the blackness of the onyx has been transfigured. It is the sight, however, of all that our King has done for us, that leads us to *desire* to imitate His example. We seem to hear His voice from the Cross—

"This have I done for thee,
What doest thou for Me?"

We have to see that our work is in agreement with His work, or rather, that we co-operate with Him in His work. St. Jude, after many warnings to the Church, concludes with this exhortation: "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."[2] This is the work we have to do—to build up our spiritual temple on the faith once delivered to the saints, in union with Jesus Christ by the life of grace; for it is only by union with Him that all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord."[1] The work is great and painful; for in the Church Militant souls are fashioned with toil and pain. There *is* the sound of axe and of hammer; it is in the heavenly courts that what is here shaped with labour is placed at rest.

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[1] Rev. ii. 17.

[2] St. Jude 20, 21.

> "Blessed city, heavenly Salem,
> Vision dear of peace and love,
> Who of living stones art builded
> In the height of heaven above,
> And with angel hosts encircled,
> As a bride doth earthward move....
>
> "Many a blow and biting sculpture
> Polished well those stones elect,
> In their places now compacted
> By the heavenly Architect,
> Who therewith hath willed for ever
> That His Palace should be decked."

The toil—which, however, is not without its own blessedness—is here; the joy hereafter.

It is written that, when the people gave of their substance and service to the building of the Temple, they themselves rejoiced, and the king with them. "Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy."[2] Shall the servants of the King of kings be less glad? Shall the King Himself not rejoice when His disciples offer and consecrate themselves for the work He has begun?

[1] Eph. ii. 21.
[2] I Chron. xxix. 9.

We have then to be ever looking upon the work of Jesus Christ, and all He has stored up in the Gospel of His grace. He shows to *us* "His hands and His side"—His wounds. He has laboured to prepare the materials; let us strive to grow in love of His holy Word—the story of His Divine life and teaching.

In the next place we have to accept His invitation to make use of all He has done, so that we may do our part in willing obedience and loving service. Other voices will call to us, will invite us to leave the narrow way of the imitation of Christ, but we must not listen to them. "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." We cannot serve two masters; "*One* is your master,"[1] whether that one be Christ or another.

He Who, as David, now calls us to work, will one day, as Solomon, call us to our reward. The degree of reward will depend, however, necessarily on the willingness and perfection with which we have worked: "I will give unto every one of you according to your work";[2] but all that has been done to help the King "shall in no wise lose its reward." "Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me; that ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."[3] When the work is finished we shall see "the King in

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[1] St. Matt. xxiii. 10.

[2] Rev. ii. 23.

[3] St. Luke xxii. 28-30.

His beauty,"[1] the Prince of Peace; we shall enter into the joy of the Lord, and go no more out. Then shall be fulfilled the old promise: "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."[2]

"What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? . . . These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them into living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."[3]

[1] Isa. xxxiii. 17. [2] Isa. xxxv. 10. [3] Rev. vii. 13–17.

PASSAGES FOR READING.

(1) Gen. vi. 14; vii. 1; viii. 1–5. (Building the ark.) The ark was built at the command of God. It was a figure of the Church—Jewish and Christian.

God saved "Noah and his family in the ark from perishing by water." The Church prays at our baptism that we may be "received into the ark of Christ's Church." (See first prayer in "The ministration of Public Baptism to infants.")

(2) Exod. xxxv. 20–29. (Building the tabernacle.) Almsgiving for the work of the Church is one of the "three notable duties." Both in this passage and in the building of the Temple the "willing offering" is mentioned. "God loveth a cheerful giver."

(3) Neh. ii. 12–20. (Building the walls of Jerusalem.) The whole story of the rebuilding of the walls of the Holy City, and the mockery of Sanballat, saying, "Will ye rebel against the king?" may be taken as a type of the restoration of the Catholic Church—the City of God—where it has been laid waste. The "Catholic movement" is a building again of the waste places of Zion. It is mocked at by the modern Sanballats, Tobiahs, and Geshems, who taunt the leaders with lawlessness. (*v.* 19.)

(4) Haggai ii. 1–10. (The second Temple.) Man himself was designed to be a temple of God. The destruction of Solomon's Temple may be a type of the Fall; the second Temple a type of restored humanity.

(5) Eph. ii. 19 to end. (The human soul.) St. Paul reminds his converts that they are "an holy temple." (Compare 1 Cor. iii. 17; vi. 19; 2 Cor. vi. 16; 1 Peter ii. 5.)

(6) Rev. xxi. (The holy city.) The ark, the tabernacle, the Temple, the Church of God, and the heart of man, are all types of the Home of God.

XI.

TRINITY SUNDAY

The most Ancient of Mysteries

Type

"He lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, and said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant." (Gen. xviii. 2, 3.)

Jesus Christ

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (St. Matt. xxviii. 19.)

The Soul

"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." (Rev. iv. 8.)

XI.

The most Ancient of Mysteries

ST. PAUL, in writing to the Romans, asserts that the existence and power of God may be known without any revelation other than that given in the natural order. "That which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead."[1] Again, while preaching at Lystra, St. Paul taught that God had not left "Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."[2] It belongs to Natural Theology to teach what may be known of God by the light of reason alone.

If by *theology* we understand speaking or reasoning about God, then we must acknowledge that there were great theologians among the pagan nations of antiquity, as well as among the Hebrew people.

St. Thomas Aquinas, in his commentaries on Aristotle, calls the old poets—Orpheus, Hesiod, and Homer—

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[1] Rom. i. 19, 20.

[2] Acts xiv. 17.

"theological poets,"[1] and Aristotle himself calls them "Theologists."[2] The teaching of the pagan theologians could not go beyond the domain of Natural Theology. They had the power of reasoning about God from principles, the truth of which could be known by the light of nature. They possessed the innate capacity of perceiving and judging the facts of both common and scientific experience, and of drawing conclusions from these facts.

There is, however, another set of truths regarding Almighty God that cannot be known by the natural reason alone. These truths are therefore called supernatural, and belong to the science of Dogmatic Theology. They rest upon faith, or rather they are known by faith which rests upon the authority of God Himself Who reveals these supernatural truths.

Natural Theology finds its arguments in reason and experience, while Dogmatic Theology discovers the premisses of its conclusions in the *fontes* or sources of Christian revelation, which are chiefly the Holy Scriptures and Divine tradition.

Natural and Supernatural Theology are both concerned with the same "material object"—as the Schoolmen call it—or subject-matter—God.

They differ widely, however, in their "formal object," or the aspect from which they regard their subject. Natural Theology is a preparation for the supernatural truths of revelation — for Dogmatic Theology — and hence the Greeks and Romans who are addressed by St. Paul in his Epistles are shown first of all the truth of the belief they have already attained, and then are led onward to the supernatural truths of the Gospel. But in passing from Natural to Supernatural Theology the disciple was necessarily brought into the realm of mystery. Hitherto he had indeed, by the light of reason, been led to accept many mysterious truths; he had been taught something of the attributes and works as well as of the existence of God, but he had never been initiated into the inscrutable mystery of the Divine Being; he knew nothing of the Trinity of Persons in the one infinite First Cause; he had no knowledge of the Incarnation of the Word, although this mystery had been felt after, and anticipated in dim and mistaken ways; he had yet no grasp of the Spirit of God sent forth in His eternal and temporal Mission. To the Roman and the Greek as well as to the Jew this teaching as to the Trinity in Unity came as a revelation. It did not make these mysteries comprehensible to the reason, but it threw light upon many of the intuitions of the past, and showed the harmony and beauty of the faith of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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[1] *Poetæ theologi.*

[2] *οἱ θεολόγοι* (*Metaph.*, lib. xi. al. xii. c. vi.).

God had, as it were, during long ages been leading the great nations of antiquity through the courts of their temples, and teaching them many truths in their mysteries, in order to prepare them for the reception of the hidden wisdom which was to reveal the very inmost sanctuary of His own Being through the Divine oracles uttered by His Eternal Word in the great mysteries of His Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection and Session at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

In time past God had spoken to the world by Moses, Isaiah, and many another; by Orpheus, Hesiod, and Homer; by Plato and Aristotle; by Buddha and Zoroaster.

He had taught them as they were able, according to their capacity, "precept upon precept; line upon line; here a little, and there a little . . . with stammering lips."[1]

But now the "fulness of time" has come, and He has a further message, a final revelation of Himself; and for this He will send no ordinary messenger, but His own Son.

Hence it is written that "God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son."[2]

God is in no hurry; He works towards an end slowly as men reckon time, but He goes straight onwards, surely and without check.

His end, His object as far as we can see, is to bring about the ultimate rest of the creature in the Creator; the union of God and man. From Him are all things, and to Him all things tend.

By His Word and by His Spirit He, "in the beginning," created the heavens and the earth, and restored them out of chaos to order and beauty.

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[1] Isa. xxviii. 10, 11.

[2] Heb. i. 1, 2.

By His Word and by His Spirit He fashioned mankind in His own image and likeness; and by His Word and by His Spirit He wills to restore in them that image, marred and disfigured by sin.

This restoration of the created to the idea of God in creation seems to be the

> "... one far-off Divine event,
> To which the whole creation moves."

In the "fulness of time" it therefore pleased the Father to reveal more fully than He had done the Trinity of Persons in the One Divine Nature.

"He sent forth His Son, made of a woman."[1]

The step was taken that united humanity with Deity: God and man were no longer apart, but joined together in one Person never to be sundered.

Jesus Christ becomes the bond of union between Deity and humanity. It was by union with Jesus Christ that the human race was to be brought into union with God.

The Incarnation was therefore a great revelation, not only of the love of God but of the Being of God. It was the disclosure of the Plurality of Persons in the Deity, for it was the Second Person of the Trinity Who took to Himself a human body and soul, and was born in time of Mary the Virgin of Nazareth. Jesus Christ has spoken, as hitherto no man had been allowed to speak; through nineteen centuries He has vindicated His claim to be the Son of God, by exerting an absolutely unique influence over the intellect of the human race.

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[1] Gal. iv. 4.

He has done more; He has obtained what none other has obtained—the undying love of humanity witnessed to by millions of lives offered to His service, and surrendered to Him in martyrdom.

But to know Jesus Christ is to be brought face to face with mystery. The unique effect of His life has a unique cause. What this cause is we cannot learn from Natural, but only from Supernatural Theology. It is summed up for us in the Creeds when we are told: "The right faith is, that we believe and confess, that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man; God, of the Substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and Man, of the Substance of His Mother, born in the world; perfect God, and perfect Man; of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting. Equal to the Father, as touching His Godhead; and inferior to the Father, as touching His Manhood. Who, although He be God and Man, yet He is not two, but one Christ."

The acceptance therefore of Jesus Christ involves the acceptance of the doctrine of the Plurality of the Divine Persons. That this Plurality is a Trinity we learn from the revelation of our Lord, in His teaching about the Holy Spirit.

The Annunciation to Mary referred to this Sacred Trinity. "The angel Gabriel was sent from God"—the Father; his message conveyed to Mary the tidings that she was to be the Mother of Emmanuel—the Son; and this Divine mystery was to be accomplished by "the Holy Ghost . . . . the power of the Highest." At our Lord's Baptism the voice of the Father was heard; while upon the Son the Spirit of God was seen descending. Thus the Epiphany of the Holy Trinity was granted at the outset of our Lord's active ministry. Throughout His three years' teaching He constantly spoke of His Father, and of the Spirit; while, at the close of His earthly sojourn, at the moment of His Ascension, He sent forth His Apostles endued with power to enrol the world into an eternal union with God—Father, Son, and Spirit: "Go . . . . teach all nations, baptising them into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."[1]

The Bible, which opens with an indication of this Plurality of Persons in the One Infinite God, closes also with the same revelation.

In Genesis we read: "And God said, Let *Us* make man in Our image, after Our likeness."[2]

The Book of the Revelation of St. John closes with these words: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. . . . I am the root and offspring of David. . . . And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come."[3]

The knowledge of Jesus Christ involves the acceptance of the most ancient of all mysteries—the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity. Jesus Christ is the easy way to God. He Himself has told us that, "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent."[1]

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[1] St. Matt. xxviii. 19. [2] Gen. i. 26. [3] Rev. xxii. 13, 16, 17.

To know Jesus Christ is to know God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

In the Creed *Quicunque*, commonly called "The Athanasian," the Church has refuted certain heresies that speculative minds had fallen into in their effort to understand what is really incomprehensible. The Church does not require of every man that he should endeavour to enter into these metaphysical subtleties, but she does demand that if he attempt to do so, he shall be warned off from certain pitfalls into which others have fallen. The world of shadows and empty unrealities represented by such false teachers as Sabellius and Arius, she would fain have him avoid, and fix his attention upon the real significance of the doctrine of the Trinity. The Church would remind us that our Christian life is begun by an entry into fellowship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; that it is continued by constant intercourse with the Father, through the merits of the Son and the grace of the Holy Ghost; but she would warn us that the attitude in which we should approach this mystery should not be one of critical inquisitiveness, but of reverent worship: "The Catholic faith is this, that we *worship* one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity"; and again,

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[1] St. John xvii. 3.

"The Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity is to be *worshipped.*"

The Holy Scriptures, we find, attribute a special work to each Person of the Blessed Trinity—to the Father, Creation;[1] to the Son, Redemption;[2] to the Holy Ghost, Sanctification.[3]

In the words of the Catechism, "I believe in God the Father, Who hath made me and all the world; I believe in God the Son, Who hath redeemed me and all mankind; I believe in God the Holy Ghost, Who sanctifieth me, and all the elect people of God." In each of these works the Three Persons of the Godhead co-operate. God is One in His Being, and in His work we cannot leave this Unity out of sight.

Thus we are plainly told that the Son is also the Creator, for "without Him was not anything made that was made."[4] In Redemption the Father sends the Son,[5] and the Holy Spirit shares in the presentation of the Sacrifice of Calvary.[6] The work of Sanctification, though especially committed to the Holy Spirit, is likewise due to the Father[7] and the Son.[8]

It is for this work of God in His Threefold Name that the Church on earth unites in praise with the Church in heaven.

It is the thought of the majesty and goodness of God that inspires her highest acts of worship. Step by step the Church leads us upward. The ascent by the way of supplication, confession of sin, confession of faith, and intercession, prepares the heart for the more profound worship of adoration. The holiness, power, glory, wisdom, justice, and truth of God are all acknowledged in the act of adoration offered before the heavenly altar; and with this solemn homage the Church militant unites in her Eucharistic Sacrifice. The "Holy, Holy, Holy" of the angels and of the redeemed is the threefold ascription of adoration to the Three Divine Persons echoed on earth in the Ter-Sanctus of the Divine liturgy. In the eternal hymn that is sung in the worship of the Church on earth is the realisation of the words of the creed, "The Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped."

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[1] Isa. xl. 28.
[2] Gal. iii. 13.
[3] 1 Cor. vi. 11.
[4] St. John i. 3.
[5] Gal. iv. 4, 5.
[6] Heb. ix. 14.
[7] St. John xvii. 17.
[8] Eph. v. 26.

"Most ancient of all mysteries,
Before Thy throne we lie;
Have mercy now, most merciful,
Most holy Trinity."

In heaven this worship centres round the altar of the Lamb, "as it had been slain,"[1] on earth it is grouped around the Blessed Sacrament; for there is but one Sacrifice and one presentation of it, and this is offered on earth "as it is in heaven." They who have set aside the Divinely ordained centre of worship in the Eucharist have departed from the standard of God's Word, and followed the corrupt tradition of a still more corrupt rationalising Protestantism. They who adore the Incarnate Word upon His altar on earth are following the pattern given to them in the heavenly mount, and preparing for the worship of heaven.

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[1] Rev. v. 6.

Thus the mystery of the Holy Trinity leads us to the thought of worship, and worship is found, as in heaven, so on earth, to centre round the sacrificial altar of the Incarnate Son.

PASSAGES FOR READING.

(1) Gen. ix. 12, 13. The three primary colours of the rainbow may be looked upon as typical of the Blessed Trinity. (Cf. Rev. iv. 3, where St. John sees the throne of God and "a rainbow round about the throne," and Rev. x. 1, where the "mighty angel" is clothed with the power and authority of God, and bears "a rainbow upon his head.")

(2) Gen. xviii. 1–3. Though "three men" appeared, yet Abraham addresses them as one: "My Lord," "the Lord." (*v.* 30.)

(3) Ps. lxvii. 6, 7. In David's benediction we notice a threefold mention of God: "God, even our own God, shall bless us; God shall bless us."

(4) Isa. vi. 1–4. The thrice-repeated "Holy"—an indication of the Three Divine Persons.

(5) Ezek. xl. 10. The three chambers in the Temple gate all belong to one building.

(6) Hag. ii. 4, 5. The promised Presence—"I," "the Word," "My Spirit."

XII.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Blessed Sacrament

Type

"And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground. And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is manna: for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat." (Exod. xvi. 14, 15.)

Jesus Christ

"Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the Bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." (St. John vi. 32, 33.)

The Soul

"Lord, evermore give us this Bread." (St. John vi. 34.)

XII.

The Blessed Sacrament

JUST before His Ascension our Lord gave to His Apostles the command to "Go . . . and teach all nations, baptising them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."[1]

We have in these words a Divine direction given to the Church to preach the gospel; to admit those who accepted the gospel into the unity of the Church; and to observe the explicit commandments given by Jesus Christ. Among the things which He had commanded there stood out first of all that memorable rite which He had instituted on the same night in which He was betrayed. He had said, "This do in remembrance of Me"; but He had also identified the bread and the wine, which He distributed to His disciples, with Himself by the strange and significant words: "This is My Body: this is My Blood."

In the words spoken before the Ascension our Lord plainly commands the use of the Sacrament of Baptism: "Go . . . baptising them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." By the reference to the things which He had commanded them to observe, He at least included the celebration of the Eucharist, even if He did not refer to it exclusively. This is made the more noticeable by the immediate addition of the words which promise His Presence: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

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[1] St. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

I.

God had from the beginning been present in the world by His essence, knowledge, and power, but occasionally He had willed to manifest this Presence. Thus we read that in Eden our first parents "heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden."[1]

Again, when God would deliver His people out of Egypt, He manifested His Presence to Moses on Horeb, "the Mount of God." We read that "the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And He said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover He said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God."[1]

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[1] Gen. iii. 8.

At another time "Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire."[2] When Elijah had fled to Mount Horeb, "the Lord came to him," and the "still small voice"[3] spake to him as he stood on the Mount before the Lord.

But there is no need to multiply instances of these manifestations of God's Presence in the Old Testament. We have only to remember how frequent these appearances were. Usually these manifestations were merely transitory—lasting but a short while; but there was a notable exception to this rule in the first Temple, where the Shechinah of "glory" abode above the mercy-seat; an abiding witness, not to the localising of the Deity, but to a special manifestation of His watchful, abiding love for His people.

All these manifestations of the Deity were preparatory for that great Epiphany when God manifested Himself in Christ Jesus. Hitherto God had, at a given place, for a given purpose, allowed His all-pervading Presence to become recognisable by man; but now in the Incarnation He sends forth His Son to take human nature, and in its limits manifest the immensity of the Divine charity to men. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son."[1] This was an altogether new manner of Presence. It allied, as it were, the Divine Nature with the material world; it became the great sacrament of godliness, whereby God began to fulfil the types of the Old Law, and to bestow grace through created channels.

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[1] Exod. iii. 2-6. [2] Exod. xix. 18. [3] 1 Kings xix. 12.

But in this visible Presence our Lord abode on earth but three-and-thirty years. What then did He mean by the promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world"?

Clearly our Lord meant something very definite, and yet, quite as evidently, He did not mean that in His human nature, visible to the eyes of men, He would continue to dwell upon earth as He had dwelt during the three-and-thirty years of His past life. Did He then merely mean that this promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," and that other promise, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you,"[2] should be fulfilled only by the Divine Presence by which He had always been in the world before His Incarnation? Surely not. Surely the Presence He promised was to be the result, the fruit of His Incarnation, and not a return to that Presence which was altogether independent of the work and office of the Word made Flesh.

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[1] St. John iii. 16.

[2] St. John xiv. 18.

We look then for a fulfilment of this promise made by Jesus Christ; we seek for some Presence resulting from, and growing out of the Incarnation. Is there such a Presence of Jesus Christ now in the world? Is there a manifestation of the Incarnate Son of God?

Let us for a moment forget that the voice of the Church is the authority sent by Jesus Christ to teach the world, and let us look back at the Holy Scriptures and recall some words of our Divine Lord Himself. In the Holy Gospels we read that on the night of His betrayal Jesus said, "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer."[1] "And . . . Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is My Body. And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is My Blood."[2]

Here we have a fulfilment of our Lord's promise to be the "Bread of life,"[3] and here we have an explanation of those words which so puzzled the faithless disciples—as they have puzzled many since who desire to understand "a hard saying" rather than to believe it—"Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you."[4]

Now here in the institution of the Blessed Sacrament we have a Presence of Jesus Christ given to His Church, depending so entirely upon the truth of His Incarnation that the Fathers of the Primitive Church used to take their arguments in favour of the Incarnation from the universally acknowledged fact of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Sacrament of His Body and Blood.

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[1] St. Luke xxii. 15.
[2] St. Matt. xxvi. 26–28.
[3] St. John vi. 35.
[4] St. John vi. 54.

Here, then, in the wonderful mystery of the altar is the fulfilment of the promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." When the words of Christ have been duly said by the priest over the elements of the bread and wine, the Church teaches, and the Scriptures prove that, by the might of Him to Whom is given "all power in heaven and earth," the outward sign no longer tells us of all that is present on the altar. By faith alone can we know the inward part of that mystery. By faith we behold the very Body and Blood, that is the very Presence of Jesus Himself, as God and Man, hidden and veiled under the sacramental species.

"Faith, our outward sense befriending, makes our inward vision clear."[1]

"Alleluia, not as orphans
  Are we left in sorrow now.
Alleluia, He is near us,
  Faith believes, nor questions how.
Though the cloud from sight received Him
  When the forty days were o'er,
Shall our hearts forget His promise,
  I am with you evermore?"

And yet how little have we known perhaps of this Divine Presence! With how little love have we worshipped Him Who is the Bread of Life in this mystery! When St. John the Evangelist tells us in the beginning of his Gospel of the rejection of the Incarnate Word upon His coming into the world, he states that it was not strangers but His own people that rejected Him. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not."[1] And when St. John Baptist was censuring some for not having known One Who had already been among them for years, it was not to strangers that he spoke, but it was to the favoured Jews, even to the priests and Levites, that he found it necessary to speak in terms of rebuke. "There standeth One among you, Whom ye know not."[2]

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[1] St. THOMAS AQUINAS.

Might not similar words be true of many who are not strangers—not, that is, outside the Christian Church—to-day? "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." They had not faith; they could only go by sense and sight;—"Is not this the carpenter's son?"[3]

They could not pierce the human veil that hid the Godhead, and say with St. Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."[4]

And so, although for nearly two thousand years God has, through His Church, manifested His Divine Presence in the Holy Sacrament of His Body and Blood, there are still many to whom it is "an hard saying"; and who, if they do not act quite as those of old who, after this saying "walked no more with Him,"[1] yet continue to walk by sight and not by faith; and because in the Holy Communion they see naught but the outward sign of the bread and wine, they deny the unseen Presence. They would not only, if they could, reduce the most profound mystery of this Sacrament to a bare memorial of an absent Christ, but profess to take scandal and offence at the honour paid by the Church and her faithful children to the sacramental Presence of our Lord.

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[1] St. John i. 11.
[2] St. John i. 26.
[3] St. Matt. xiii. 55.
[4] St. Matt. xvi. 16.

It has been well and truly said that there are two intellectual worlds always in the presence of each other, and always in conflict—two schools of thought, two teachers contending and irreconcilable, two tendencies and two pathways which diverge one from another, and lead directly to or from the truth as it is in Jesus. These two worlds or schools may fitly be called the world of substance and the world of shadows. The creation of a substantial nature in the beginning, the Incarnation by the union of two substances in one Person, the substantial Presence of Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, the participation of His substance by His members in His mystical Body the Church, and the substantial resurrection of our bodies from the grave; all these are truths of the same order, resting upon the revelation of God, and taught by His Church—that is by the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth.

Such is one school, namely the Holy Catholic Church.

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[1] St. John vi. 66.

The other school exists by its side, and has sometimes even sprung up within it. In the beginning the Docetæ denied the substantial reality of the Manhood of Jesus, and taught that it was a phantasm, an apparition, a heavenly vision, not flesh and blood, taken of Blessed Mary.

So now there are those who deny the substantial Presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist, and teach that it is not a reality, but a sign and a figure. There are those who would tell us that types and shadows are not, as St. Paul said they *were*, done away, but that, instead of the figure of the Paschal Lamb, we have still but a type, a figure, and that an inferior one—namely, the bread and wine—to remind us of One Who is not there, except so far as He is everywhere. And, having denied the sacramental Body of Jesus, we are not surprised that they deny His mystical Body, the Church, and that some even return to the fountain-head of heresy, and go on to deny the Godhead of the Man Christ; these are the Docetæ of the latter days, as the Docetæ were the Sacramentarians of the first century.

But enough; let us turn from unbelief to the voice of the Church and the faith of Christendom. Let us for our encouragement remember that after all the victory is on God's side—"They that be with us are more than they that be with them";[1] that the great multitude of the Church of God, East and West, are united in faith and love towards this Divine mystery by which the promise of Christ is fulfilled: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

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[1] 2 Kings vi. 16.

Are there not some among us who can make it their chief work to propagate the knowledge and love of our Lord in this holy mystery?

But if we would make other men to know and love the Blessed Sacrament, we must first be disciples of the Blessed Sacrament ourselves.

We must love Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament with a special fidelity, and make it the support of supernatural life in sacramental Communion as often as we may, in spiritual Communion as often as we can, in daily thought of this Presence of God on earth, and devotion towards it.

"From the rising of the sun," said the Prophet Malachi, speaking of the Holy Eucharist, "even unto the going down of the same My Name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto My Name, and a pure offering: for My Name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts."[1]

And so it is throughout the whole world from sunrise to sunset; for in the kingdom of Jesus, the Church on earth, the sun never goes down.

His Presence is worshipped day by day; millions upon millions kneel in His sacramental Presence; and a sound as of many waters is heard in heaven as the

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[1] Mal. i. 11.

Church on earth falls down in worship, crying, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory; glory be to Thee, O Lord most high."

That worship upon earth mingles with the worship of heaven, for before the throne there are saints and martyrs and angels and archangels; and in the splendour of eternal glory all created things are casting their crowns of gold before the feet of Jesus Christ, saying, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."[1]

And let our prayer be again in the words of St. Thomas:—

"Lord Jesu, Whom, by power Divine
Now hidden 'neath the outward sign,
We worship and adore;
Grant, when the veil away is rolled,
With open face we may behold
Thyself for evermore."

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[1] Rev. v. 13.

PASSAGES FOR READING.

(1) Gen. iv. 2–7. The first recorded acceptable sacrifice is figurative of the "Lamb" of God. Cain's sacrifice was not in itself unacceptable. The offering should represent the surrender in will and desire of the life of him who offered. Cain, we gather, offered without any such self-surrender. Sin is the withdrawal of man's allegiance. (See *v.* 7.)

(2) Exod. xii. 3–17. The Passover was a great type of the Eucharist. Jesus Christ is "the Lamb without blemish"; we abide under the merits of His blood, and are safe.

(3) Exod. xvi. 11–21. The word manna means "What is this?" Its roundness and whiteness, and the fact that it came from heaven, and was eaten in the morning, are all suggestive of the Bread of life.

(4) St. John vi. 29–35. Our Lord teaches that He is the Bread of life—typified by the manna.

(5) St. John vi. 41, 43, 66–69. We should believe the mysteries of the Faith, on the authority of Jesus Christ. We are not called upon to understand what is beyond our grasp.

(6) St. Matt. xxvi. 26–28. Our Lord here fulfils all the types of His Presence by instituting the Eucharist. In the Old Law were types, shadows, figures; in the Gospel we have realities.

XIII.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Fruit of the Spirit—Love

Prophecy

"I have loved thee with an everlasting love." (Jer. xxxi. 3.)

Jesus Christ

"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples. As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love. If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love. . . . This is My commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." (St. John xv. 4–10, 12.)

The Soul

"Thy love to me was wonderful." (2 Sam. i. 26.)

XIII.

The Fruit of the Spirit—Love

THE Epistle for this Sunday[1] is taken from the writings of St. John, the beloved disciple—the Apostle of the Love of God.

The opening words speak of hate and of love—the two great passions of the heart. "Marvel not," he says, "if the world hate you. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."[2] St. John then refers to the characteristic proof of love—self-sacrifice for the beloved. "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."[3] He goes on to draw the conclusion that all lesser sacrifices are to spring from love, for God has Himself so commanded. "This is His commandment, That we should believe on the Name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave us commandment."[4] This leads St. John to the great truth that obedience is the best proof of love; that love is the bond of union between God and the soul; and that the gift of the

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[1] 1 St. John iii. 13–24.

[2] 1 St. John iii. 13, 14.

[3] 1 St. John iii. 16.

[4] 1 St. John iii. 23.

Holy Spirit is especially the gift of union with Christ: "He that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us."[1] The Gospel reveals in a parable the love of God in inviting all to the heavenly banquet;[2] while the Collect sums up the whole in the prayer that God (Who never fails to help and govern those who are brought up by Him in His stedfast fear and love) would keep us under the protection of His good providence, and make us to have a perpetual fear and love of His holy Name.

Love is the chief and most mighty passion of the human heart. Apart altogether from religion love is the force that has ever had the most power to mould and fashion the lives of men.

The next great force is the opposite of love—hate.

It is by no means a peculiarity of the Christian faith to associate love with God. The greatest of the philosophers of Greece did but sum up the belief of antiquity when he put into the mouth of Phædrus the words: "Love is a mighty god, and wonderful among gods and men, but especially wonderful in his birth. For he is the eldest of the gods, which is an honour to him; and a proof of his claim to this honour is, that of his parents there is no memorial; neither poet nor prose-writer has ever affirmed that he had any.

[1] 1 St. John iii. 24.

[2] St. Luke xiv. 16–24.

As Hesiod says:—

> 'First Chaos came, and then broad-bosomed Earth,
> The everlasting seat of all that is,
> And Love.'

In other words, after Chaos, the Earth and Love—these two—came into being." Phædrus continues, "Not only is he the eldest, he is the source of the greatest benefits to us,"[1] and then, like St. John, he mentions the great sacrifices that love has inspired.

St. John, therefore, taught nothing new when he declared that "God is Love."

> "Not for us only, Nicias, as we thought,
> Was Love begotten of the immortal gods."[2]

To us, however, has been revealed more fully the nature of God—the Trinity of Persons—and the especial claim of the Third Person to be called the Love of God.

"In Divine things the name of 'Love' is to be understood either essentially or personally. It is when considered personally that Love is the special name of the Holy Spirit, as the 'Word' is the proper title of the Son."[3]

For this reason St. John, in the Epistle for this Sunday, connects his teaching as to the importance of love with the gift of the Holy Spirit: "We know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us."[4]

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[1] *Symposium*, PLATO.
[2] THEOCRITUS, *Idyll* xiii.
[3] *Summa Theo.*, St. THOMAS AQUINAS, pars i. Q. xxxvii.
[4] 1 St. John iii. 24.

The same teaching is continually repeated in the New Testament, as, for example, when St. Paul in writing to the Romans declares that "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us";[1] and when he writes, "I beseech you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the Spirit";[2] or, once again, when in writing to the Galatians he teaches that "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace," etc.[3]

In thinking therefore of love we must necessarily think of the Holy Spirit—"the Love of the Father and the Son." "God is Love," and God imparts His love to men chiefly through the Eternal Spirit. It is to Him as the "Finger of God's right hand," that the Church prays to "pour love into our hearts."[4]

How, then, do we receive the indwelling gift of the Holy Ghost?" It is clear that we cannot receive it by natural generation, but by supernatural: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."[5] The natural life comes through carnal generation, the supernatural life through spiritual regeneration. This was the truth that our Lord spoke of to Nicodemus when He said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

By Holy Baptism therefore we are reborn to God by being incorporated into Jesus Christ. By this spiritual regeneration we are made "members of Christ." Our Lord was "conceived by the Holy Ghost," and overshadowed by the Holy Ghost in His Baptism, in order that He might bring within the reach of humanity the means of grace whereby we might receive the adoption of sons—a new and special relationship with the Father through union with the Incarnate Son. Humanity was, as it were, to be incorporated with the Sacred Humanity of the Second Adam—to share His life; and through Him we were to be made the "children of God and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven." This work was accomplished by the Son through the mission of the Holy Ghost.

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[1] Rom. v. 5. [2] Rom. xv. 30 (R.V.). [3] Gal. v. 22.
[4] "Infunde amorem cordibus," *Veni Creator*. [5] St. John iii. 6.

St. Paul speaks of two Divine missions: first, "God sent forth His Son . . . . to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons";[1] and then, secondly, "God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son"[2] into our hearts, so that we may call God our Father. By Holy Baptism the soul is therefore brought into union with God, through being made a member of the mystical Body of God's Son. Jesus Christ is the "Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body."[3]

The supernatural life of grace is added to the natural life—the rational soul is elevated into a higher sphere; it is quickened together with Christ, in Whom we are "builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."[4]

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[1] Gal. iv. 4, 5. [2] Gal. iv. 6. [3] Eph. i. 22, 23. [4] Eph. ii. 22.

In every soul united to Jesus Christ, or as theologians say, in a "state of grace," there are the three virtues—faith, hope, and charity. Love is necessarily the greatest of these, since it is peculiarly characteristic of God Who is Love. The seven gifts of the Holy Ghost are also bestowed upon the regenerate soul in order that they may render fruitful the theological virtues, and enable them to bring forth the "fruit of the Spirit." Our Lord taught His Apostles this truth when He compared the relationship of the soul with Himself to the figure of the vine. The life of the vine is manifested in its fruitfulness—"The branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine. . . . . I am the vine: . . . . he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." As then the life of the branch united to the vine is the life of the vine itself, even so the life of the soul united to Jesus Christ is His life—the life of grace, the life of God. If "God is love," we are not surprised that the life of Jesus Christ is a life of love. His Father's glory, His Father's will, His Father's business, are all objects of our Lord's love. But this is not all; for the Father loved the world, and every human soul that is born into the world is an object of His love; and so the Son manifested this Divine charity, and sacrificed Himself for the world.

The love of the Father gave to the world the only-begotten Son, inspired Him to spend His life in ministering to the world, and then to offer Himself freely on the Cross as a supreme proof of the Divine and human charity of the Sacred Heart. From heaven He sends forth His Spirit to be the life of the mystical Body—the Church—and to refashion the soul after His likeness, He Himself being the express image of the Father. Hence the chief of the theological virtues is love, and love also is the first "fruit of the Spirit." From the virtue of charity, by the help of the Holy Spirit, the fruit of charity is produced.

To understand this we must remember the difference there is between charity as a theological virtue, and charity as a fruit of the Spirit. The word "love," as we generally use it, is a much wider word than "charity." Love may be called twofold, natural and supernatural.[1] There is, first of all, natural love—the desire of the mind or rational soul for whatever it thinks to be for its good. Then there is supernatural love, which is charity properly so-called. Charity is "the love of appreciation," the value we set upon God and the things of God. Cardinal Manning, in his *Internal Mission of the Holy Ghost*, says, "The love of friendship is the highest, the purest, and the most unselfish, and therefore the most perfect form of love. . . . This it is that constitutes the love and confidence of God's servants in this life. This is the 'charity' which is properly and specifically understood when we speak of being in the love of God and of our neighbour. The definition then of charity is this: it is the love of friendship, by which we will and desire for God all good things for His own sake and because of His infinite perfections. . . . We ask every day in the Lord's prayer: 'Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name.' The hallowing of the Name of God is that He may be known and worshipped, and *loved*, and served, and honoured by all His creatures. It is a desire that the grace of God be poured upon all—that an increase of glory may be given to God purely for His own sake."

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[1] I have not attempted here to give definitions of "love" and "charity." St. Thomas says that *love* may be conveniently divided "in amorem amicitiæ et concupiscentiæ." See *Summa*, I. 2, Q. xxvi.; and of *charity* he says, "Charitas amicitia quædam est hominis ad Deum." *Summa*, 2. 2, Q. xxiii. art. I.

The subject of antique friendship in Greece is more fully discussed in my book, *The Soul, Here and Hereafter.*

The Holy Ghost then is given to dwell in the regenerate; and, where He is, there is the virtue of charity and its manifestation in acts of love—the fruit of His indwelling. Love as a fruit of the Spirit is the manifestation in thought, word, and deed, of the virtue of charity.

The "virtue" is hidden away in the depths of the soul. The "fruit" is the outward witness to this hidden force.

Where the sun is there is light and heat.

Where the Holy Ghost is there is charity.

The light and the heat are not the sun, but they are the result of the sun's presence, and they are the forces that help to fertilise the earth. Even so the love that is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost is intended to enable the soul to bring forth much fruit. It is essential to fruitfulness that the branch abide in the vine. It is equally necessary for the soul to abide in Christ. The branch abiding in the vine becomes in due season fruitful; the soul abiding in Christ becomes holy. If then we desire to know whether we are in the grace of God, we must examine our works, our words, our thoughts. We judge of a tree by its condition: if it is fruitless, leafless, withered and dry, we are justified in believing that life is not there. If, on the contrary, it is full of sap, if in due season it puts forth leaves and fruits, we rightly conclude it does so because it is alive. Each tree brings forth its own special fruit; so it is also with the soul. If it be full of the life of Christ; if it be permeated with His Spirit, then it will bear fruit in a Christlike life. St. Paul tells us: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance"; and he contrasts this simple "fruit" (ὁ καρπός) with the "works" (τὰ ἔργα) of the flesh. "The flesh," says Dr. Lightfoot, "is a rank weed which produces no fruit properly so called." The fruits and flowers are the glory of the unfallen world; thorns and thistles are the crops that spring from sin. Love, joy, peace, are especially that part of the fruit of the Spirit which belongs to the whole aspect of Christian life; longsuffering, gentleness, and goodness are the qualities that are characteristic of social life; while "honesty, gentleness, temperance," are principles of right conduct.

The Divine charity manifested itself in acts of self-sacrifice and tender affection to man. It is written of our Lord that "He went about doing good." His thoughts were full of kindness, and full of plans to make others happy. What are our own thoughts? Are they full of self, or of God and our neighbour? What the mind of Jesus Christ planned His mouth uttered and His hands carried out. We shall do well to look into our deeds and words to see how far they manifest Christ and His Spirit.

Natural love shows itself in a desire to give to, and suffer for, the beloved; and in the will to avoid that which may give pain.

Supernatural love manifests itself in the same way—its fruit is in acts of self-sacrifice.

God has shown to us His essential charity by the gift of His Son. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son."

The same fruit, manifesting the same Divine charity, is seen in the Son Who "gave Himself for us" as a supreme proof of love; for "greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."[1] Even so, if our life is lived in union with God, there will be self-sacrifice and obedience. "If ye love Me," our Lord says, "keep My commandments." Obedience is the form in which the self-surrender demanded by love will usually find its expression.

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[1] St. John xv. 13.

Hence our Lord said, "I came . . . not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me."[1]

Hence, too, He made obedience to His precepts the proof of love, and made the whole law to depend upon the two commandments, the love of God and of our neighbour. For this reason St. Paul taught that "love is the fulfilling of the law,"[2] since love is not the mere observance of precepts, but the intuitive knowledge of the mind of the beloved, enabling one who loves to obey from a right motive. Servile fear may keep the law of God, but love alone will fulfil it.

If then we need tests of our being in the grace of God, let us examine ourselves as to this first manifestation of the presence of the Holy Ghost in the soul.

Let us, for example, look through the long list of the characteristics of love in the thirteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians; we shall notice how eminently practical these points are which St. Paul enumerates. Charity

1. Suffereth long—is kind.
2. Envieth not.
3. Vaunteth not itself.
4. Is not puffed up.
5. Doth not behave itself unseemly.
6. Seeketh not her own.
7. Is not easily provoked.
8. Thinketh no evil.

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[1] St. John vi. 38.

[2] Rom. xiii. 10.

9. Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but . . . in the truth.
10. Beareth all things.
11. Believeth all things.
12. Hopeth all things.
13. Endureth all things.

And remember, the object of self-examination is not to discourage ourselves, but to find out what is lacking, in order that we may become more perfect. It is not enough to be in the grace of God, to possess the presence of the Holy Spirit in our soul. He is there for a purpose, that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit.

"E'en like two little bank-dividing brooks
That wash the pebbles with their wanton streams,
And having ranged and search'd a thousand nooks,
Meet both at length in silver-breasted Thames,
Where in a greater current they conjoin :
So I my Best-beloved's am ; so He is mine.

"E'en so we met ; and after long pursuit,
E'en so we join'd : we both became entire ;
No need for either to renew a suit,
For I was flax, and He was flames of fire :
Our firm-united souls did more than twine ;
So I my Best-beloved's am ; so He is mine.

"He is my Altar ; I, His Holy Place ;
I am His guest ; and He my living food ;
I'm His by penitence ; He mine by grace ;
I'm His by purchase ; He is mine by blood ;
He's my supporting elm ; and I His vine ;
Thus I my Best-beloved's am ; thus He is mine.

"If all those glittering monarchs that command
The servile quarters of this earthly ball
Should tender, in exchange, their shares of land,
I would not change my fortunes for them all:
Their wealth is but a counter to my coin;
The world's but theirs; but my Beloved's mine."[1]

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) St. John xv. 1–8. Christ is the Vine; we are grafted into Him by Baptism. Union with Him is to share in His life—His grace. This life must show itself in the fruit it bears. Hence our works will be judged, because they manifest the hidden life of the soul. Mortal sin separates the soul from God, but repentance restores union.

(2) St. John xv. 9–15. We are the friends of Jesus Christ; we share His life, and His works are those that we strive to do. This may involve self-sacrifice, but He has set the example by going to the utmost limit of self-surrender in dying to show His love for us.

(3) St. John xv. 16–end. Our Lord has chosen *you*. "We love Him because He first loved us." We are not only to love God, but to "love one another." A friend is one of the best of God's gifts. Our Lord loved all the Apostles, but St. John was in a special way His friend—the "disciple whom Jesus loved." Hence, in St. John's writings, there is so much about love.

(4) St. John xiii. 1. (Compare with St. Matt. xxvi. 17–30.) St. John tells us what our Lord said to the Apostles after He had instituted the Holy Eucharist. His giving Himself in the Blessed Sacrament was the more immediate entry into

[1] F. QUARLES.

the mystery of His Sacrifice. Self-sacrifice is the great proof of love.

(5) St. John iii. 1–8. Sin is disobedience to the will of the Beloved, and thus a sign of want of love. Love desires to please and anticipate the will of the one loved.

(6) St. John iv. 7–end. It is an old tradition of the Church that when St. John was too feeble through great age to walk he was carried into the church, and always repeated the command of Jesus Christ—"Little children, love one another"; "He that loveth not, knoweth not God: for God is Love."

XIV.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Fruit of the Spirit—Joy

Prophecy

"Thou wilt show me the path of life: in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

(Ps. xvi. 11.)

Jesus Christ

"These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." (St. John xv. 11.)

The Soul

"O send out Thy light and Thy truth, that they may lead me: and bring me unto Thy holy hill, and to Thy dwelling. And that I may go unto the altar of God, even unto the God of my joy and gladness: and upon the harp will I give thanks unto Thee, O God, my God." (Ps. xliii. 3, 4.)

XIV.

The Fruit of the Spirit—Joy

NEXT to love comes joy—"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy . . ."[1] The Gospel for this Sunday[2] speaks of the joy of the Saviour. The man who recovers his lost sheep "layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing." He calls his friends: "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost." Our Lord says that "likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth," and He repeats this assertion in another parable.

Love is an affection of the mind excited by qualities in an object that are capable of communicating pleasure. Joy may be said to be a pleasing emotion arising from the satisfaction of our desires, the experience of happiness; or, as it has been well said, "the radiant atmosphere which plays around pleasure; and if pleasure is, roughly speaking, satisfaction, and the highest pleasure the highest satisfaction, joy will be the illumination—half conscious, half unconscious—which plays about the life of true pleasure."[3] Joy may therefore be natural or supernatural; it may relate to things apart from God, or it may relate to God and to creatures as related to God. "Joy," says St. Thomas, "is caused by love either through the presence of the object loved . . . or by benevolence which rejoices in the welfare of the beloved, even though he be absent."[1] The indwelling of God, Who is Love, in the soul is the cause of spiritual joy. The soul that possesses God cannot but be glad. Joy therefore traces its presence back through love to the indwelling life of God the Holy Ghost. Hence St. Paul teaches that "the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."[2] After the Lord had spoken to the Apostles of love and union with Himself, He said, "These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."[3]

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[1] Gal. v. 22.

[2] St. Luke xv. 1–10.

[3] Canon NEWBOLT, *The Fruit of the Spirit.*

Joy is indeed a note of the Incarnation. The angel who appeared to the shepherds to announce the birth of Christ spoke of it as a joyful event. "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy."[4] Immediately after the Annunciation Mary visited her cousin Elizabeth, and in her Magnificat she said, "My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour!"[5] Our Lord often spoke to the Apostles of the joy of the Sacred Heart; He calls it "My joy."[6]

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[1] *Summa Theo.*, 2-2, Q. xxviii. art. i.
[2] Rom. xiv. 17.
[3] St. John xv. 11.
[4] St. Luke ii. 10.
[5] St. Luke i. 47.
[6] St. John xv. 11; xvii. 13.

After the Resurrection the disciples "believed not for joy";[1] and after the Ascension, in spite of all their suffering, they were filled "with great joy."[2]

Indeed, this holy joy is mentioned far too often in the Epistles to make it possible to quote the instances. The Apostles will allow no sorrow, no persecution, to interfere with this rejoicing, but write to their converts to "rejoice in the Lord alway."[3] Were they in trials? then indeed they may be "as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing."[4] Were they tempted? then they are to "count it all joy."[5] St. Paul's own hope for himself is that even in martyrdom he may finish his "course with joy,"[6] and endure all things even as the Master, Who "for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame."[7] The Apostles had always ringing in their ears the welcome they knew awaited them on the eternal shore: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."[8] They had ever in mind the Divine Master's promise, "Your sorrow shall be turned into joy";[9] and "your joy no man taketh from you."[10] The joy then that is the fruit of the Spirit is no mere worldly gaiety; it is not the high animal spirits of the man who has no pain, no worry, no trouble of any kind. It is a part of "the fruit of the Spirit" which the world cannot give or take away: it is the brightness of a living faith;[1] the radiance of well-founded hope;[2] the glow of burning charity. St. Peter named this joy when he wrote of the love of the early converts towards Jesus Christ: "Whom having not seen, ye love; in Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."[3]

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[1] St. Luke xxiv. 41.
[2] St. Luke xxiv. 52; Acts v. 41.
[3] Phil. iv. 4.
[4] 2 Cor. vi. 10.
[5] St. James i. 2.
[6] Acts xx. 24.
[7] Heb. xii. 2.
[8] St. Matt. xxv. 21.
[9] St. John xvi. 20.
[10] St. John xvi. 22.

The very Name of Jesus brings joy to the heart of the Christian, as St. Bernard taught in the well-known words, "Nomen Jesu est mel in ore, melos in aure, et jubilum in corde." "All our reasonable acts are divided into speaking, hearing, and thinking; and, lo! we cannot speak of Him, but He is as *honey in our mouths;* and if we hear of Him, the talk doth make the best *melody in our ears;* finally, the greatest *joy of our heart,* and the truest also, springeth from our meditation of Him."[4]

If we compare the joy that is a fruit of the Spirit with worldly gaiety, we shall find that holy joy disposes the soul to prayer and intercourse with God. It turns towards God; while worldly gaiety avoids meditation, has no taste for prayer, and finds its satisfaction in noise, frivolous society, continual amusement, and dissipation. The joy that is a characteristic of our Lord does not shun self-sacrifice, but, on the contrary, has energy for the endurance of all things, is careful to do well even the minor duties of life, brushes off worries, and is able even in sorrow to be "alway rejoicing"; always, that is, confident that God is good, and that "all things work together for good to them that love God."[1] Supernatural joy springs from union with God, while mere gaiety arises from physical causes, and from union with the world.

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[1] "Joy . . . in believing," Rom. xv. 13.

[2] "Joyful through hope," Baptismal Service.

[3] 1 Peter i. 8.

[4] Bishop LAKE.

We have this fruit of the Spirit potentially within our soul if we are in the grace of God. But it is quite possible that we may experience but little of the brightness of the true light. By self-examination we shall be able to test ourselves. Are we more inclined to pray when our life runs smoothly, or does happiness, success, and good health hinder our prayers, and almost lead us to neglect them? How do we act in trials? Do we at once lose our good spirits, and become gloomy and depressed? If we cannot answer these questions satisfactorily we have reason to watch ourselves, lest we mistake high spirits for the joy which is the fruit of the Spirit.

The fact is that this fruit needs tending and developing as carefully as any of the others. We must fight against gloom and distrust when trials come upon us, remembering the Master's example, and the assurance that if we are to be His disciples we *must* take up our cross and follow Him. We must learn to look upon the bright side of things. "Heaviness," says the psalmist, "may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."[1] God has promised that He will never forsake us; the danger is lest we should forsake Him. If we have gone astray, then too He promises that He will receive us back if we return—"Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." He Himself comes to us in the Blessed Sacrament, continually renewing the gift of His Presence, and bestowing through the Chalice a special gift of joy.

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[1] Rom. viii. 28.

"Thou spread'st a Table in my sight,
Thy unction grace bestoweth;
And oh, what transport of delight
From Thy pure Chalice floweth."

St. Thomas, in his magnificent sequence *Lauda Sion*, would have us remember this atmosphere of joy which should be always around the Sacramental Christ.

"Sit laus plena, sit sonora,
Sit jucunda, sit decora,
Mentis jubilatio."[2]

The fact that the offering of the Holy Sacrifice is always Eucharistic—a service of praise and thanksgiving—even when offered in times of penitence, or for the Holy Souls, is a continual witness to the spirit of joy that haunts the Church. She, like the great Apostle, knows how to be "as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing."

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[1] Ps. xxx. 5.

[2] "Full and clear ring out thy chanting,
Joy nor sweetest praise be wanting,
From thy heart let praises burst."

Yes, if we would bring forth fruit, we must foster and develop the joy that is within us through the Holy Ghost. But we must also avoid what would lessen the growth of this inward joy. Venial sin dims the lustre of the fine gold of love, and this dimness is known by a lessening of the joy of the Lord in the spiritual life.

The more perfect the soul is, the more it is filled with joy. The Sacred Heart is on fire with the love of man, and consequently bright with the joy of God.

Next to the joy of Jesus Christ is the joy of His Mother. Her joy is so near to the joy of her Son, because she is, we believe, sinless by grace, while He is sinless by nature. The nearer a soul approaches to God, the less there is of sin and the more of joy.

If, then, we would bear the fruit of the Spirit, we must avoid even the lesser wilful sins and faults.

Unkind thoughts, words, judgments, and even looks, go far to spoil the joy of the spiritual life; while carelessness, irregularity, want of recollection, and a thousand other little defects, make in the aggregate a dark cloud that obscures the brightness of the inward light, and casts a shadow upon life. A gloomy spirit is so far from being pleasing to God, that it is, we believe, in itself sinful. Dante would seem to have held it a mortal sin—and so it may become if it is allowed to develop itself completely. A gloomy, melancholy spirit tends towards distrust, loss of faith, and final impenitence and despair. Nature herself, as it were, protests against this ingratitude, and so Dante shows us the souls of those who had nothing of the joy of the Spirit, bemoaning their fate:—

> "Sad once were we
> In the sweet air made gladsome by the sun,
> Carrying a foul and lazy mist within."[1]

One secret in the natural order for fostering the joy of the Holy Spirit in the soul is to have some occupation. Idleness is in itself sinful, and is among the sins that pay wages even here. The idle man is seldom, if ever, happy. If we have not to "work" for our daily bread, then let us work none the less for our salvation here and hereafter. If we can find no interests in life, have no study or art in which we can occupy our time, we are indeed miserable and on the highway to perdition. Dr. Watts's statement that "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do," contains a great truth.

We are told in Boswell's *Life of Johnson* that "against melancholy he recommended constant occupation of mind, a great deal of exercise, and moderation in eating and drinking. He observed that labouring men, who work hard and live sparingly, are seldom or never troubled with low spirits." The physician and the priest often have to give the same prescription.

It is not however here on earth that the fruit of joy will attain to absolute perfection. That belongs to the hereafter. The sorrows of earth must to some extent dim the joy of the soul; and among these sorrows is the consciousness of sin. When sin is impossible, then joy will develop rapidly. The joy of the Holy Souls is beyond our conception. "I do not believe," wrote St. Catherine of Genoa, "it would be possible to find any joy comparable to that of a soul in purgatory, except the joy of the blessed in paradise—a joy which goes on increasing day by day, as God more and more flows in upon the soul, which He does abundantly as every hindrance to His entrance is consumed away. The hindrance is the rust of sin; the fire consumes the rust, and thus the soul goes on laying itself open to the Divine inflowing." The purifying flame of the Divine Love wraps round the soul freed from the body, and the Precious Blood thus applied "cleanses it from all sin." The soul mounts up towards the Paradise of God; it there beholds its Lord, and hears from His human lips the words of Divine welcome: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

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[1] *Inferno*, canto vii.

"My Joy, my Life, my Crown!
My heart was meaning all the day,
Somewhat it fain would say,
And still it runneth muttering up and down
With only this, my Joy, my Life, my Crown!"[1]

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[1] GEORGE HERBERT.

PASSAGES FOR READING.

(1) Ezra iii. 10–end. Sorrow was mingled with joy when the foundations of the second Temple were laid. Men could not but recall the glory of the first Temple, and yet the second was to be more honoured. So the Fall of man brought sorrow, and sorrow is mixed with the joy of the Redemption, although the glory we derive through the Second Adam is greater than that which was lost through the first Adam.

(2) Neh. viii. 1–13. The reading and hearing the words of one we love is a joy to the soul. If the people found their strength in "the joy of the Lord" (*v.* 10) because they "understood the words that were declared unto them," how much greater should the joy be of those who have the words of Jesus Christ Himself! Do we find strength and joy in hearing and reading God's Word?

(3) Isa. xii. The soul rejoices in the mercy and goodness of God in redemption. The wells of salvation are the merits of Jesus Christ, placed within our reach by the Sacraments.

(4) Isa. li. 9–16. Our joy should look backward as well as forward. We should trace the mercies of God in the past, our deliverances in trouble, or preservation in danger and temptation. The blessings of this life, as well as those we hope for hereafter, must not be left out of sight.

(5) St. John xvi. 20–24. The joy of God comes from God, and all the trials of life cannot take it from us; but we need to pray—to ask in the Name of Jesus—that we may guard His Presence in our soul.

(6) St. John xx. 19, 20. We too shall be glad when, on the Resurrection morning, we "see the King in His beauty," and as "children of the Resurrection" we enter into the joy of the Lord. (Cf. Rev. xxi. 1–7.)

XV.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Fruit of the Spirit—Peace

Type

"The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts." (Hag. ii. 9.)

Jesus Christ

"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." (St. John xiv. 27.)

The Soul

"Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken. . . . Is it not good, if peace and truth be in my days?" (2 Kings xx. 19.)

XV.

The Fruit of the Spirit—Peace

WE read in the Book of Ezra[1] that the foundations of the second Temple were laid in great joy—and mourning. The people rejoiced because the Temple was to be rebuilt; they wept because it seemed that no Temple could ever be so glorious and beautiful as the old Temple of Solomon that had been destroyed.

"The word of the Lord," however, came by Haggai, saying, "Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?" Then followed the promise: "The Desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord. . . . The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts."[2]

The great richness of the first Temple in its sculptures, its gold, and, above all, in the "five precious things" that belonged to it, made the second Temple seem "as nothing."[3] How then is it said, "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former"? It could only be in the Presence of Christ. In the second Temple Christ, the Son of God, was, as a Child, offered to God; there He sat in the midst of the doctors; there He taught and revealed things hidden from the foundation of the world. The glory of the Temple of Solomon was, that in it the majesty of God appeared, veiling itself in a cloud. In "the latter house" that same majesty showed itself, in very deed united with the Flesh, visible to sight; so that Jesus Himself said, "*He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.*"[1] This was that of which Malachi sang with joy: "The Lord, Whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His Temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, Whom ye delight in."[2]

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[1] Ezra iii. 10–13.

[2] Hag. ii. 3, 7–9.

[3] See PUSEY'S *Minor Prophets* and Reading X. in this vol.

"In this place will I give peace." Spiritual peace is, throughout prophecy, part of the promise of the Gospel. If we turn in thought from the Temple to the story of the human race, we find an instructive meaning in the words of Haggai and Malachi. Man was created to be the temple of God. He was intended to know, love, and serve God, and to have within him the Divine Presence—the Image of the invisible Glory. This human temple fell, as it were, into ruin when sin entered into it. The intellect was darkened; the affections went astray; the will revolted. But even then the promise was given of a restoration, which was fulfilled in the Second Adam, the living

[1] St. John xiv. 9.

[2] Mal. iii. 1.

sanctuary of the Divinity, the temple of God, of which Jesus Christ spoke when He said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."[1]

The glory of the Second Adam far exceeded the glory of the first, and in the temple of the Sacred Humanity there was the peace of God—the perfect harmony—the absolute union between God and man. This peace is especially associated in prophecy and in the Gospel with Jesus Christ.

Isaiah had proclaimed His advent as One Whose Name should be called "Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."[2]

The angels of the Nativity welcomed Him with the annunciation of peace: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of goodwill."[3]

Zacharias praised God by prophesying that the Child Who should "give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death" should also "guide our feet into the way of peace."[4]

Simeon, when he presented the Desire of all nations in the second Temple, could sing his *Nunc Dimittis* and "depart in peace," since his eyes had seen the salvation of God coming to be "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of . . . Israel."[5]

Our Lord, after teaching His Apostles, said, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace." And again He promised, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you."[1]

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[1] St. John ii. 19.
[2] Isa. ix. 6.
[3] St. Luke ii. 14.
[4] St. Luke i. 79.
[5] St. Luke ii. 32.

The Apostle St. Paul, in his preaching, proclaimed: "The word which God sent . . . preaching peace by Jesus Christ."[2] It is revealed, moreover, that the fruit of the Spirit is peace, as well as love and joy.[3]

Writing to the Ephesians, St. Paul tells them that Jesus Christ is "our peace":[4] and for the Philippian converts he desires that "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, may keep" their "hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."[5]

What then do we understand by this "peace of God," which is so associated with Jesus Christ that He calls it "My peace"?

Man's nature is twofold—spirit and flesh. In each of these regions of life he is conscious of discord and struggle—there is but little "peace." The words of St. Paul find an echo in every heart: "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my

[1] St. John xiv. 27.
[2] Acts x. 36.
[3] Gal. v. 22.
[4] Eph. ii. 14.
[5] Phil. iv. 7.

members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."[1]

St. Paul points to the discord within his own being, and to the deliverance that he expects from Jesus Christ. Peace is to take the place of discord "through Jesus Christ our Lord." Man stands related to God and to the world. In his relationship with God he is intended to find peace, but with regard to the world he may not hope for it. Our Lord Himself has taught this: "These things I have spoken unto you, that *in Me* ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world";[2] and again, "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division."[3] That is to say, the persecutions that would arise through the enmity of the world against Jesus Christ and His followers would certainly hinder tranquillity, while they could not touch the inward peace that He came to bestow. Certainly the Christian life is not exempt from worry, trials, sickness, pain, and grief. We have no encouragement to think that the profession of discipleship with Jesus Christ will bring temporal gain of any kind. On the contrary, our Lord plainly warned

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[1] Rom. vii. 18–25. [2] St. John xvi. 33. [3] St. Luke xii. 51.

His followers, in the words just quoted and in others, that if any man would be His disciple he must be prepared to take up the cross. What, then, does this promised "peace" mean? "The word which is translated 'peace' does not, in the original, mean only or chiefly rest, or the absence of disturbance. The Hebrew root word means *whole, entire;* it is applied to a person or thing which is as it should be according to its origin or capacity. Of this state of wellbeing, freedom from disturbance is either a condition or a result. Yet here, as so often else in the history of language, the incidental meaning of the word has permanently displaced the original; and we translate it by an expression which never suggests to us English the idea of completeness, but only of tranquillity or rest. But when our Lord, speaking in Syro-Chaldee, used the word, He had His eye, no doubt, at least partially, on its original sense. He meant not merely tranquillity, but that which leads to it. He meant wellbeing; and wellbeing not in any of the contracted and earthly senses which limit it to things of this life, but wellbeing in its largest sense, as affecting the highest interests of a being like man."[1]

By "My peace" our Lord seems to have meant the gift of that integrity which man had lost—the restoration of that wholeness of being which was intended for him when he was fashioned after the image and likeness of the Creator.

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[1] Dr. LIDDON'S *Easter Sermons*, xix.

By regeneration this is begun; and, as the spiritual life develops, the soul is gradually healed by union with Jesus Christ. The intellect, illuminated by faith, is more and more enabled to know God. The affections are purified and drawn upwards through the Sacred Humanity. Man rises from the love of that which is seen towards the unseen, uncreated beauty of God. The will is strengthened and enabled to offer itself to the holy will of God. In this way man returns through Jesus Christ to a state of friendship with God, and harmony is established between the creature and the Creator. The more complete this union is, the greater the peace that man experiences; but it can never be perfect here. Imperfection clings around the holiest life on earth. Hereafter, then, it must be that the peace of God shall be realised in all its absolute fulness. God Who "hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."[1]

In the unseen intermediate state the soul is cleansed from all stain or rust of sin. The prayer of the Church for those who have died in the Lord is, "May they rest in peace." In the resurrection the body will share in this "peace" which passeth all understanding. Heaven is the holy city, Jerusalem that is above, the Vision of Peace.

"The fruit of the Spirit is . . . peace." Is this fruit to be found in our own life? Are we at peace with

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[1] Phil. i. 6.

God, with our own inner self, and do we as much as possible "live peaceably with all men"?

Our Lord promised this peace to His disciples, and it was after His Resurrection that He often repeated the words, "Peace be unto you." Peace is especially the characteristic of the risen and heavenly life, but it is bestowed in some degree here also. It manifests itself in every word and work of life. We see it in the lives of the holy Apostles; in spite of persecution, in spite of every earthly trial, the atmosphere of the apostolic epistles breathes a calm and a peace that are not of this world. "Perhaps no Christian, since the days of the Apostles, has illustrated the true peace of soul which Jesus Christ gives . . . so fully as the great Augustine. Read that pathetic story of his early life which he gives in his *Confessions.* What a restless life was his before his conversion! The intellect tossed about on the waves of speculation, without solid hold on any one reassuring truth. The heart distracted between the ideals presented by false philosophies, and the ideals suggested by sensuality. The will unable to fasten on any serious duty; the victim of a feverish unsettlement, or of a capricious languor. The conscience profoundly stirred by the terrible conviction that the Son of Peace was not there, and alternating between the phase of insensibility and the phase of agony. Then came his conversion, and with it what a change! Peace in his understanding, which now surveys, with a majestic tranquillity, the vast realms of revealed truth; more penetratingly, more comprehensively, than any Christian since St. Paul. Peace in his heart, which now turns its undistracted and enraptured gaze upon the Eternal Beauty Who, as he says, is always ancient yet always young. Peace in his will, for which the problem of duty has been simplified: he knows what he has to do, and he does it with all his might. Peace in his conscience. There is no longer any sense of an inward feud with the Law of Absolute Holiness. All has been pardoned through the Blood of Jesus; all is possible through His grace. What do we know of this peace; this peace of mind, of heart, of will, of conscience? Let us not mistake for it some false peace; mere brute insensibility of soul, which will only last so long as health lasts, and will desert us in the closing scene. We need a peace which the world cannot give. We need this prerogative gift of Christ. . . . We have seen it in others; but we cannot analyse it. It pervades their life; it plainly keeps their hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God. But in itself it passes understanding. Its presence is traceable in the quiet resolve which is never disturbed by the ever-varying circumstances of the passing years; in the well-compacted harmony of the faculties; in the undertone of thankfulness and praise which is proof against the tragical possibilities of the days to come. This peace is no more touched by the troubles of life than the depths of the ocean are stirred by the storm which sweeps its surface. This peace is an inalienable possession; inalienable, except by the act of him who possesses, and who may, of course, forfeit it."[1]

Let us pray God, of His mercy, that we may obtain this peace; and, having obtained it, may keep it to the end.

"My soul, there is a country
Far beyond the stars,
Where stands a wingèd sentry
All skilful in the wars:
There above noise and danger
Sweet Peace sits crown'd with smiles,
And One born in a manger
Commands the beauteous files.
He is thy gracious Friend,
And—O my soul awake!—
Did in pure love descend,
To die here for thy sake.
If thou canst get but thither,
There grows the flower of Peace,
The Rose that cannot wither,
Thy fortress, and thy ease.
Leave then thy foolish ranges,
For none can thee secure
But One, Who never changes,
Thy God, thy life, thy cure."[2]

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[1] Dr. LIDDON's *Easter Sermons*, xix.

[2] HENRY VAUGHAN.

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) Isaiah xlviii. 1–9. No privileges (verse 2) can give peace—only obedience to God. Sin is disobedience, and therefore "there is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked." (*v.* 22.)

(2) Psalm xxxvii. 28–end. The wicked may seem to prosper more than the righteous. Earthly prosperity depends on many circumstances, and does not attend upon religion or impiety. But in the end each reaps what he has sown. Righteousness in the end exalteth nations and people, because it develops all the highest powers of man, and checks those that are harmful.

(3) Wisdom iii. 1–10. "The souls of the righteous . . . are in peace"—here and for evermore.

(4) St. John xx. 19–29. Our Lord in these few verses repeats His benediction three times, "Peace be unto you." He knew the life of His disciples would not be peaceable as the world understands "peace"; but it was to be a life ever growing in the love and knowledge of God—shining more and more unto the perfect day. This peace may be in every Christian life.

(5) Phil. iv. 4–8. Here joy and peace go together, and St. Paul gives many precepts that will foster and develop peace.

(6) 2 Thess. iii. 16. "The Lord of peace,"
"The Prince of peace,"
"King of peace,"

all regal titles that tell of the kingdom of the God of peace. To obey our King is to share in His peace.

XVI.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Catholic Church

Prophecy

"I will set up one Shepherd over them, and He shall feed them, even My servant David; He shall feed them, and He shall be their Shepherd." (Ezek. xxxiv. 23.)

Jesus Christ

"I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep. . . . . I am the good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine. . . . . And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one flock, and one Shepherd." (St. John x. 11, 14, 16.)

The Soul

"The Lord is my Shepherd; therefore can I lack nothing." (Ps. xxiii. 1.)

XVI.

The Catholic Church

"Church of the Living God,
Pillar and ground of truth,
Keep the old paths the fathers trod
In thy illumined youth.

"Move, Holy Ghost, with might
Amongst us as of old;
Dispel the falsehood, and unite
In true faith the true fold."

WE read in St. Matthew's Gospel that, "when Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that Thou art John the Baptist: some Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My

Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

These words have given rise to much controversy, since it is upon this promise of our Lord—"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church"—that the whole of the Papal claims have been made to rest.[1]

In the early Church no such claims were known, and consequently the words were very differently interpreted. The more usual Roman Catholic interpretation is that by "this Rock" our Lord intended St. Peter (*Petra*), but this interpretation was merely one among many given by the Fathers.[2] Following the explanation given by the majority of the Fathers, we understand by these words spoken to St. Peter that our Lord promised to build His Church upon the fundamental truth of the Incarnation.[1]

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[1] "*Q.* Why is the Bishop of Rome the Head of the Church? *A.* The Bishop of Rome is the Head of the Church because he is the successor of St. Peter, whom Christ appointed to be Head of the Church. *Q.* How do you know that Christ appointed St. Peter to be Head of the Church. *A.* I know that Christ appointed St. Peter to be the Head of the Church because Christ said to him, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build My Church,' etc."—*Catechism of Christian Doctrine,* approved by the Cardinal and Bishops of England and Wales, and directed to be used in all their Dioceses.

[2] *Seventeen* Fathers taught that St. Peter was the Rock: *forty-four* Fathers taught that St. Peter's *Faith* was the Rock: sixteen that Christ is the Rock. A convert to the Roman Church binds himself by the Creed of Pius IV. to interpret Scripture only according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers. His difficulties will be great in keeping this promise, for if he does so he must reject the Roman Catholic *Catechism.* There is no unanimous consent on the subject one way or the other, but the majority of the Fathers are against the Petrine interpretation.

St. Peter had confessed this great mystery when he said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Our Lord replied, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church."

St. Peter was to be associated with our Lord in this work, and he was to be the first to admit converts into the Church, even as he had been the first to grasp the truth of the Incarnation. St. Peter was, with the other Apostles, to be one of the twelve foundation-stones of the Church, built upon the solid Rock-bed of the Divine and human natures of the Incarnate Word. St. Peter from this union with his Lord was to share in His strength. St. Peter in his First Epistle refers to this title of our Lord: "The stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence";[2] as though he recalled the words of warning spoken by his Master, "All ye shall be offended because of Me"; and his own boastful self-confidence that led him to declare, "Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended."[3] The strength of God is often in Holy Scripture compared to a rock: David exclaims, when he has been delivered from Saul,

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[1] These Readings do not profess to deal with controversy. Those who desire to study the Roman claims may be referred to SALMON's *Infallibility of the Church;* and Canon GORE's *Roman Catholic Claims.*

[2] St. Peter ii. 7, 8.

[3] St. Matt. xxvi. 33.

"The Lord is my rock";[1] and in the Psalms it is written of God that "He only is my rock and my salvation."[2] In these passages, and in other parts of God's Word, the title "Rock" is used of God, but never of man.

It was therefore most probably the union of the two natures in the Person of the Word that was to be the rock on which the Church should be built; for, as St. Paul teaches, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."[3]

This is, moreover, the interpretation placed upon this promise to St. Peter in the ancient Collect for the Vigil of the Feast of SS. Peter and Paul, still retained in the Roman Missal.

When the time came for the fulfilment of these promises,[4] we see that St. Peter received his apostolic commission in the same words as the other Apostles. No gift beyond what was given to all was bestowed on St. Peter.[5] What, however, is beyond all question is that our Lord spoke of a future Church that He would build—"I *will* build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

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[1] 2 Sam. xxii. 2.

[2] Ps. lxii. 2, 6.

[3] 1 Cor. iii. 11.

[4] St. John xx. 21.

[5] The thrice-repeated command to St. Peter, "Feed My sheep, Feed My lambs," was, St. Cyril of Alexandria teaches, a renewal of his apostleship lost by the threefold denial. Any "pre-eminence" that St. Peter enjoyed was merely that of the senior Apostle and leader of the rest, who should strengthen the brethren who had been scandalised by his fall, and thus make reparation. In any case St. Peter was never mentioned as "*head* of the Church," nor is there a word as to any power to transmit any special privileges he had to a successor. There is not a word in the New Testament to lead converts to trust that the cry, "I am of Cephas," was anything to rejoice in, or that union with Peter's successors would secure immunity from error.

At another time our Lord spoke of this Church as possessing authority. "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church; but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."[1]

Immediately after the giving of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost we read, "The Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved."[2] In St. Paul's Epistles we read that Christ—not St. Peter—is the "Head over all things to the Church, which is His body," and that "Christ also loved the Church."[4] Again we read an exhortation to those who were in authority to "feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood."[5]

What then is this Church? To answer this question we must briefly examine what is told us in the New Testament. Our Lord chose twelve Apostles, and gave them certain powers, such as to baptise, celebrate the Eucharist, and absolve from sin in His Name. He

[1] St. Matt. xviii. 15–17.
[2] Acts ii. 47.
[3] Eph. i. 22.
[4] Eph. v. 25.
[5] Acts xx. 28.

gave them a command to "teach all nations"—to speak in His Name and with His authority; and finally He told them that, after His Ascension, they were to await in Jerusalem the promised gift of the Holy Ghost. Thus He formed His mystical Body.

The vacant place in the Apostolic College, left by the fall of Judas, was filled before the day of Pentecost by the election of Matthias, who was then "numbered with the eleven apostles."[1] On the morning of the day of Pentecost we learn that this "Body" consisted of about one hundred and twenty persons.[2] To this company came the promised gift of the Spirit of God. The breath of life was breathed into the Body which our Lord had prepared, and it became the living Church of God. Of this Church—His mystical Body—Jesus Christ is the Head. He alone can be the Head of His own Body, and as the Head He was fitly enthroned in heaven, so that He might be "over all things to the Church."[3] Admission into the unity of the Church was, from the first, by Holy Baptism.[4]

Continued communion with the Church was maintained by submission to the pastors of the Church, and by sharing in the common acts of prayer and worship. "They continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."[5] Here we have then the constitution of the Church on earth as it existed on the evening of the day

[1] Acts i. 26.
[2] Acts i. 15.
[3] Eph. i. 22.
[4] Acts ii. 41.
[5] Acts ii. 42.

of Pentecost. It consisted of the hierarchy—the Apostles—and those who were by baptism admitted into their fellowship; thus they were all united with one another, and with their Divine Head Jesus Christ.

As time went on the Church spread throughout all lands, but its constitution remained the same.[1] It still consisted of "the union of the faithful—the baptised—with their lawful pastors, the bishops and priests." They who separated from their bishops became schismatic; if they lapsed from the orthodox faith they were also guilty of heresy. The one Episcopate deriving authority from the Divine Head of the Church was the representative of our Lord's authority throughout the world. But as the multitude of the faithful increased, it became needful for the Episcopate to delegate some of its authority and powers to others—the presbyters—who in turn represented the Church in their own sphere of action.

We see, then, the idea of the Church militant when its organisation had fully developed. The world was mapped out into dioceses; each bishop representing in his diocese the faith of the whole Episcopate; each priest in his parish representing the bishop and teaching the one faith; each layman receiving this faith and nourished by the Sacraments, tracing his connection with the whole Church through the priest to the bishop, and thus with the entire Episcopate and with Jesus

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[1] See, for a full discussion of the subject, *The Church and the Ministry*, by Canon GORE; *Ministerial Priesthood*, Canon MOBERLEY.

Christ. If a bishop erred he was responsible to his brethren, and they in council were bound to correct him: if a priest erred the bishop of the diocese was responsible for his correction; while in turn the priest tended his flock and rendered an account of it to his bishop.

In this way the visible unity of the Church depended on the Episcopate, and a council of the bishops became the final court of appeal.

We must beware, however, of thinking of the Church as limited to this world. The Church is one Body, over which there is one Head, Jesus Christ.

This Body, although but one, is in three states, triumphant, expectant, and militant. It consists, therefore, of all who are already in the Church triumphant; of all who are being purified in the Church expectant; and of all who are in union with the successors of the Apostles on earth—the Church militant.

To make the Church a merely earthly body, consisting of a human head—the Pope—and members in the same order of life, is to mar greatly its unity.[1]

The Scriptural, Catholic idea of the Church is that which insists on the unity of the whole body of the faithful under one Divine Head. St. Paul prays that we "may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ: from Whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."[1]

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[1] In a pamphlet called *The Divine Teacher*, Fr. HUMPHREY, S.J., entirely ignores Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church, and insists that the Church is perfect here on earth with head and members in the same order of life.

Amid all the outward divisions of Christendom there are certain unities remaining; there is the unity of government, in the apostolic succession of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons; the unity of faith, in the acceptance of the Nicene Creed; the unity of life through the Sacraments.

There is "One Lord, one faith, one baptism."[2]

The raising of opinions into dogmas by the Roman Church has greatly obscured the unity of belief; while the strife as to "who should be the greatest"[3] and have the pre-eminence among the bishops, has been in a great measure the cause of the divisions of Christendom.

At the Œcumenical Council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451) the Fathers declared that "the holy and Œcumenical Synod has decreed that it shall not be lawful for anyone to bring forward, or to write, or compose, or devise, or to teach men any other Creed" than that we now call the Nicene. "But those who dare compose any other Creed, or to bring forward, or teach, or deliver any other Creed to those who are desirous of turning to the acknowledgment of the truth from Heathenism, or Judaism, or any heresy whatsoever; if they are Bishops or of the Clergy they shall be deposed, the Bishops from the Episcopate, and the Clergymen from the Clergy, and if they are monks or laymen, they shall be anathematised."

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[1] Eph. iv. 15, 16.

[2] Eph. iv. 5.

[3] St. Mark ix. 34.

These words fix the blame for the divisions of Christendom upon those who no longer are content with the Nicene Creed as perfected by the Council of Constantinople, but have compiled a new Creed, entitled the "Creed of Pope Pius IV.," and insist upon its acceptance by all converts. This Creed of Pope Pius IV. consists of the Nicæno-Constantinopolitan Creed with the addition of the Tridentine definitions, and there have lately been added also the definitions of the Vatican Council. Who can tell what additions to the Faith "once delivered to the saints"[1] may yet be added to this preposterous defiance of the decree of the Œcumenical Council of Chalcedon? It is sometimes unfairly retorted that the Church of England added "Thirty-nine Articles" to the Creed in the sixteenth century. The fallacy is clearly seen when we remember that no convert is required to sign these Articles as terms of communion; that the Articles concern the clergy only; that they are in no sense a "Creed," but merely "Articles of religion" touching upon points of controversy; that they are not obligatory everywhere in the Anglican Communion, but only in the Established Church of England. In retaining therefore the Nicene Creed, the Church of England retains all that was required to be believed as necessary to salvation by the Catholic Church in the age of the great Councils. The unhappy divisions that have split up the Anglican Communion into parties are caused by differences of opinion concerning doctrines of great importance, no doubt, but still that are not concerned with "the Faith" as contained in the Catholic Creed. None are excluded from the Church of England who would have been included in the Church of the General Councils; while, alas! Rome has narrowed her terms of communion—shutting out all who cannot accept dogmas undreamt of during the first thousand years and more of the Church's life.[1] But the Church, in spite of all outward divisions, is still "one body in Christ."[2] Her essential unity does not depend upon the intercommunion of all her children. This belongs to the wellbeing rather than to the essence of her unity, which consists in the possession of one Faith, one Lord, one Baptism, and in the apostolic succession of the Hierarchy.

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[1] St. Jude 3.

Holiness is also a note of the Church, but, like unity, it is not entirely realised on earth. The note of holiness does not mean that every member of the Church is actually holy, but that in the Holy Spirit the Church possesses the fountain of holy life. The Holy Spirit unites the members of the Church who are in a state of grace with Jesus Christ, and conforms them to His image and likeness, and so in every age the Church has produced children who have been notable for their holiness.

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[1] For example, the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Infallibility of the Pope, have been made dogmas of faith as recently as 1854 and 1870.

[2] Rom. xii. 5.

When we say that the Church is "Catholic," we mean that her unity is to include all nations in contrast to the Jewish Church.[1] The "Catholic Faith" is that which has been believed at all times from the days of the Apostles, in all places where the Church is found, by all members of the Church. The Church has always required a confession of this Faith as a condition of admission into her Fold.

The Catholic Church therefore now, as on the day of Pentecost, consists of all who are baptised and who continue stedfast in "the apostles' doctrine"—the Catholic Creeds; the Apostolic "fellowship"—communion with the hierarchy of the Church; in "the breaking of Bread"—the Holy Communion; and in "the prayers"—the common worship of the Church.

In this way also the Church enjoys the fourth note of Apostolicity. She has the Apostolic faith, the Apostolic succession, and she is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone"[2]—the rock-bed upon which the Apostolic foundations are securely laid, and from which they derive their firmness, so that the gates of hell cannot prevail against the Church.

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[1] Some persons imagine that, because the Church of Rome claims to be the whole Church on earth, the Church of England makes a similar claim with evidently less right. This is, of course, absolutely untrue. The Church of England only claims to be a fraction of the Church. She acknowledges, it need hardly be said, that there are other portions far larger than herself, *i.e.* the Roman and Eastern Communions.

[2] Eph. ii. 20.

There are two ways by which we may separate ourselves from the Church: (1) In doctrine, by rejecting any portion of the Faith held by the Universal Church and set forth in her creeds, or by holding condemned doctrines. This is the sin of heresy. St. Paul writes: "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."[1] (2) Or we may separate ourselves in worship from the outward unity of the Church by withdrawing from the communion of the Bishop of the diocese. This is the sin of schism.[2] We pray for preservation from these sins in the Litany: "From all false doctrine, heresy, and schism, Good Lord, deliver us." In the third of the Collects for Good Friday we also pray: "Have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Hereticks, and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of Thy Word; and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to Thy flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites, and be made one fold under one Shepherd." Separation from the Church is a sin, because it mars the unity that should exist among Christian people, and hinders the spread of the Gospel. Heresy and schism are also dangerous, since our Lord founded His Church in order through it to save mankind. If we refuse to enter the

[1] Gal. i. 8, 9.

[2] 1 Kings xii. 25-33.

Ark that He has prepared, we are indeed rashly endangering our spiritual life.

As members of the mystical Body of Christ we should strive in all things to "hear the Church"; we should "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints"; we should thank God that He has mercifully called us into this state of salvation. Frequently we should make an Act of Faith:—"O my God, I believe all that Thou hast revealed, and all that Thy Church believes and teaches; because Thou art the Truth and canst neither deceive nor be deceived."

"Far down the ages now,
Her journey well-nigh done,
The pilgrim Church pursues her way,
And longs to reach her crown.

"No wider is the gate,
No broader is the way,
No smoother is the ancient path
That leads to light and day.

"No feebler is the foe,
No slacker grows the fight,
Nor less the need of armour tried,
Of shield and helmet bright.

"Thus onward still we press,
Through evil and through good,
Through pain, or poverty, or want,
Through peril or through blood.

"Still faithful to our God,
And to our Captain true,
We follow where He leads the way,
The kingdom still in view."[1]

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[1] Dr. BONAR.

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) Gen. vii. 1; viii. The ark was a type of the Church. It was fashioned of wood which may symbolise the wood of the Holy Cross.

(2) 1 Cor. xii. 12–27. The Church is compared to a human body. St. Paul would have us realise that unity is preserved by brotherly love and obedience.

(3) St. John xv. 1–9. The Church is compared to a vine. The union of the branch with the parent vine is a condition of life. By union with Jesus Christ through union with His Church we share in His Divine Life.

(4) St. Matt. iii. 2, and xii. 25. The Church is compared to a kingdom. Jesus Christ is our King: we must obey His laws, which the Church with His authority makes known to us: "He that heareth you heareth Me."

(5) St. John x. 1–17. The Church is compared to a flock. The sheep know their Shepherd, and follow Him.

(6) Eph. ii. 20–22. The Church is compared to a temple. In this temple God the Holy Ghost dwells, in order to lead all who enter the temple to offer acceptable sacrifice to God.

XVII.

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Sacraments—Holy Baptism

Type

"And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly." (Gen. i. 20.)

Jesus Christ

"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (St. John iii. 5.)

The Soul

"With Thee is the well of life; and in Thy light shall we see light." (Ps. xxxvi. 9.)

XVII.

The Sacraments—Holy Baptism

IN the Epistle for this Sunday[1] St. Paul dwells upon the mystical significance of the Sacrament of Holy Baptism: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

The ceremonial law of the Jewish Church, and the ritual and mysteries of Paganism, had prepared the way for sacred rites that were to be not merely symbolical but efficacious means of grace. Before seeking for the teaching of God's written Word on the Sacraments of the Gospel, it will be well first of all to consider very briefly what the Church teaches as to the Sacraments in general. We are intended to take up the Bible with the teaching of the Church already in our mind. This, of course, was necessarily so at the first, since the Church comes first in the order of time, and the Holy Scriptures were entrusted to her care. "The Church teaches: Scripture proves," is the statement of the early Church, and is indeed unquestionably the Divine order.

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[1] Rom. vi. 3–11.

We often speak of "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," but do we always think what we mean by those words? "Grace" is the special *help* which God gives us to perform any good work, to overcome any temptation, to say any good word, or think any good thought. Grace is, as the word implies, a "free gift," and it is given to us only for the sake of the merits of Jesus Christ. We read in the holy Gospel of St. John that "the law was given by Moses, but *grace* and truth came by Jesus Christ";[1] so that we owe to the coming of Jesus Christ this special help which we call *grace*. St. Paul tells us[2] that we are "saved" by grace—that is to say, that, but for the help (or grace) of God, we could never hope to obtain salvation. In another Epistle he says, "By the grace of God I am what I am."[3] And if ever we are so happy as to enter into heaven, we shall confess that our salvation has been obtained not by our own unassisted works, but by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Everything we do by the *grace* of God is a good work, is the work of God; and these are the sort of works which alone will stand when God calls us to be judged. The reason why God gives us His grace is that we may be made holy, and consequently we learn that without His grace we can never be saved.

The grace of God then is essential for every one of us, and the question is how can we obtain it? Are there any "means of grace"? Certainly there are, for we are all familiar with those words (in the General Thanksgiving) in which we thank God for "the means of grace," as well as for "the hope of glory."

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[1] St. John i. 17. [2] Eph. ii. 8. [3] 1 Cor. xv. 10.

The grace of God is like a fountain of living water. It has its source on Calvary; from thence it is carried through channels, ordained by God Himself, into the souls of men. What then are these channels or "means of grace"? They are principally Prayer and the holy Sacraments.

People sometimes try to excuse themselves for committing sin by saying that they "could not help it." This is not true. They *can* help it, for the *grace* of God would make them able to overcome that temptation, that passion, that bad habit, and they can get *grace* at any time by Prayer and the holy Sacraments. The Sacraments have been given to us by Jesus Christ as the *means* whereby we are to receive His help for all the needs of our spiritual life. Whatever our trouble, whatever our position, we need never despair, for the vilest sinner may by these holy Sacraments—*properly prepared for and received*—be cleansed from every sin, while the most advanced on the heavenly path can gain fresh strength, new hope, and deeper peace, through these sacred channels of the grace of God.

Prayer has always been, since the creation and fall of man, a means of grace open to all; the Sacraments, however, are the special gift of Jesus Christ to His

Church, and are the ordained channels of His merits and righteousness. Now before we consider the Sacraments one by one, our Catechism first teaches us the nature of Sacraments in general. The question, "What meanest thou by this word Sacrament?" is answered thus:—"I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ Himself, as a *means* whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof." From this we learn that three things are wanted in order to make a Sacrament.

1. The outward and visible sign.
2. The power of giving the inward grace.
3. The institution of Jesus Christ.

1. Firstly, then, a Sacrament is *an outward and visible sign.* By a "sign" we mean something we can see, which tells us of something we cannot see.

Smoke coming from a chimney is a sign to us of fire inside the house. A footprint on the road tells us that someone has passed by that way.

So in the Sacraments there is an outward sign which tells us of an inward and unseen grace. For example, in the Sacrament of Baptism, water is the outward sign, which tells us of the cleansing of the *soul* of the person baptised from the original or birth-sin in which all are born.

2. In the second place, this outward and visible sign not only signifies or shows forth an inward grace, but, provided no obstacle is placed in the way by the

recipient, actually *causes* that grace to be received. It is the *means whereby* the grace is implanted.

In this way the holy Sacraments differ from the sacred rites of the Old Testament. Circumcision and the various Jewish ceremonies figured and showed forth grace, but did not bestow it. The Sacraments of the Gospel, however, convey and bestow the grace they signify; they are not "empty signs," or "beggarly elements,"[1] but the very means ordained by God, whereby we receive the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. But the question is often asked, "*How* can an outward ceremony do good to the soul?" If we look at St. John vi. 52–69, we shall see that this is an old difficulty. "*How* can this Man give us His flesh to eat?" asked the unbelieving Jews; and "How?" has been the question of many ever since. The only answer is also the old one, "We believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God";[2] and that, as God, Thou canst do all things. Hence we believe that outward and visible signs can and do give us grace, do help our souls; because Jesus Christ has appointed them as the means or channels by which we are to receive His grace.

Hence we say that a Sacrament must be instituted or ordained "by Christ Himself." Our Lord might have chosen other ways of bringing home to us the fruit of His Passion; but, as a matter of fact, He has ordained the Sacraments, and it is our duty humbly to believe

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[1] Gal. iv. 9.

[2] St. John vi. 69.

His word, to trust His promise, and not to ask *how* these things can be. If we are too proud to accept such humble means of grace, let us meditate on the case of Naaman.[1] If we cannot have faith, and believe the words of Jesus Christ and His Church, to whom can we turn? Rather let us take heed to that gentle reproof implied in our Lord's question to His disciples, "Will ye also go away?" and answer with St. Peter, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."[2]

To teach us the great lesson of humility "the Word was made Flesh"; and by His choice of the humble sacramental means of grace we are reminded that "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty."[3] Again, it is not only necessary that the matter ordained by Christ be used, but, in order that the Sacrament may be rightly made, we must remember that the *words* ordained by Christ must also be spoken. The thing used is called the *matter* of a Sacrament (see Private Baptism of Infants in the Book of Common Prayer, where the priest asks, "With what *matter* was this child baptised?"); the words used are called the *form*. The matter and the form, taken together, make the outward sign. The form, spoken by a lawful minister at the time he uses the matter, makes a Sacrament complete.

The form, the matter, and the minister of the

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[1] 2 Kings v. 1–14.

[2] St. John vi. 67–69.

[3] 1 Cor. i. 27.

Sacrament are appointed by God; either directly, as in the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist, or indirectly through the Church, as in Confirmation; and they are therefore essential, in order that the outward sign should become a Sacrament. For example: a baptism in which wine was used instead of water would not be the Sacrament of Baptism at all. Or, to take another case: the Eucharist would be null and void if celebrated by anyone not a Priest—that is, by one who has not been ordained Priest by a Bishop. In the former case the baptism would be null and void, because the matter ordained by Christ was not used; in the latter case the Eucharist would be invalid, and therefore useless, because ministered by one who has no power from God to consecrate the matter.

Hence it follows that we must receive the Sacraments only from ministers of the Catholic Church,[1] as they alone are sent by Christ.

It may be asked whether the Sacraments always give grace to all who receive them. The Sacraments always *contain* grace, but they actually impart it only to those who receive them worthily. The sun always gives light, but if we block up the windows so that the light cannot enter the room, we remain in darkness. God, through His Sacraments, is ever giving light, and strength, and grace, but we must put no hindrance in the way, or else we shut out that grace from our soul. Moreover, if the window be entirely covered up, it will admit no light, and if it be slightly stained, the light will come in less abundantly. So, too, the soul dark by reason of unrepented deadly sin can receive no grace, while grace enters less fully when the soul is stained by lesser sins. The Sacraments are the covenanted means of grace. God's gifts have from the first been bestowed upon His Church through a solemn covenant. God made known to Abram this covenant by the change of his name to Abraham, and by the institution of the outward sign of circumcision. "The Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before Me, and be thou perfect. And I will make My covenant between Me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. . . . As for Me, behold, My covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. . . . Thou shalt keep My covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is My covenant, which ye shall keep, between Me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised."[1] St. Paul speaks of those "who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, Who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."[1]

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[1] See Reading XVI.

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[1] Gen. xvii. 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 10.

None could share in the special privileges of God's ancient Church but those who were admitted to the covenant, so that St. Paul speaks of the Gentile converts as among those who had been "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."[2]

Our Lord distinctly taught that He came not to destroy but to fulfil. He came not to abolish all covenants between God and man, but to enlarge the covenant and include all nations within its terms.

Our Lord is "the mediator of a better covenant . . . established upon better promises"[3] than that which was given to the Hebrew people of old. This covenant is no longer a covenant of promise merely, for the promise has been received.[4] It is the covenant of grace that fulfils the covenant of promise. "Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into."[1]

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[1] Rom. ix. 4, 5.

[2] Eph. ii. 12.

[3] Heb. viii. 6.

[4] St. Matt. xiii. 17.

Now it is by Holy Baptism that we are admitted into this new covenant,[2] wherein is given us a sure ground of confidence and hope.[3] Only those who have received Holy Baptism are admitted into the fellowship of this covenant on earth, and are allowed to approach the other Sacraments. But the Church teaches that the heavenly kingdom is not necessarily shut to those who have not received actual Baptism. We are taught that there is a "baptism of blood," by which those martyrs who may have been cut off before they could receive Sacramental regeneration are reckoned to be the children of the covenant. There is also the "baptism of desire," by which is meant that all who act up to the light they have received, and desire to do the will of God as far as they know it, are accepted by God. They implicitly desire Baptism by desiring to obey God. In this way the hope of salvation for the heathen and other unbaptised persons is made very wide. Only they who, knowing God, wilfully deny Him and choose evil as such for their portion are excluded. Are there any such? It is to be feared that there are, but it is to be hoped that they are few in number. It is not, however, usual to allow the special rites and prayers of the Church to be used at the burial of the unbaptised.

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[1] St. Peter i. 10-12. [2] Heb. x. 22. [3] Heb. vi. 13-19.

Humanly speaking, it would seem that our Lord chose Baptism for the Sacrament of regeneration for two reasons. (1) Because water is easily obtained everywhere; (2) because its symbolism was already universally recognised. The Greeks, the Romans, the Jews, as well as all other nationalities, were quite familiar with a mystical religious use of water.

> "From Greece the custom came, for Greece esteems
> Those free from guilt who bathe in sacred streams."[1]

Indeed our Lord in this as in much else accepted the Jewish and Pagan symbols, but infused into them a new, life-giving power to bestow what was symbolised. We have only to recall the important place given to ceremonial washing and sprinkling in the Mosaic law to understand how natural the idea of spiritual cleansing by the use of water or blood would seem to an Israelite.

In the great mysteries of Greece the candidates for admission bathed in the pure waters of the sea, while the manner of bathing and the number of immersions were regulated by the faults which each had confessed. They were considered to come out of this bath regenerate—new men. It was a *κάθαρσις*, a *λουτρόν*, a laver of regeneration; and just as the initiated in the Greek mysteries were given a pass-word—a symbol[2]—so the Christian catechumens were entrusted with the Christian Symbol[3] and the Lord's Prayer.

The continuity of much that is Christian with

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[1] Ovid, *Fasti*, bk. ii. 5. [2] *σύμβολον* or *σύνθημα*. [3] The Creed.

Judaism and Paganism has proved a veritable stone of stumbling to many; but those who know that God has been teaching men, "here a little, and there a little,"[1] from the beginning, find in this continuity an additional proof of the universal preparation of the world for the Incarnation.

Jesus Christ is the great Sacrament of godliness, since under the outward sign of His Sacred Humanity He brought Divine power on earth. The Sacraments are fitly called the "extensions of the Incarnation," since they perpetuate this mystery by bestowing grace through created channels. In the Sacraments God deals with us according to our own nature, which is material and spiritual.[2]

What we have to learn is the lesson that St. Paul insists upon in to-day's Epistle — the necessity of proving new birth by a new life. "Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead, . . . even so we also should walk in newness of life." The Gospel for this Sunday gives examples of the way in which this new life will manifest its influence upon our thoughts, words, and actions. Just as the Sacrament of Baptism surpasses the ancient, symbolic use of water, so the life of the baptised should be lived on a higher plane than that on which Jew or Gentile lived in the old dispensation.[1] St. Paul says the Christian must learn "to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawler, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men. For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men."[2]

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[1] Isa. xxviii. 13.

[2] I have dealt with the Sacramental system much more fully in my book, *The Soul, Here and Hereafter*, chap. xiii.

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) Gen. i. 2, 20. The first mention of water in the Bible is in connection with the Spirit of God. The fruitfulness of the waters is a type of the multitudes who are "born of water and of the Spirit." Waters are in Holy Writ a type of people. (See Rev. xvii. 15.)

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[1] See vol. i. p. 497, "The Waters of Life."

[2] Titus iii. 1–8.

(2) Gen. viii. 1–13, and 1 St. Peter iii. 20–22. The ark, the water, the dove, and the safety of those protected by the "wood of salvation" are all typical of spiritual birth.

(3) Exod. xiv. 26–31. When Israel came out of Egypt they passed through the waters—a type of the passage of the soul from the bondage of sin to the service of God, through the waters of Baptism. (Cf. 1 Cor. x. 1, 2.)

(4) Exod. xxx. 17–22. At our entry into the service of God we are cleansed from all sin—original and actual—by the washing in the laver of spiritual regeneration. Afterwards "he that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet," *i.e.* be cleansed from the daily faults contracted in the walk through life. See our Lord's answer to St. Peter. (St. John xiii. 10.)

(5) St. Matt. iii. 13–17. Here again we have, as at the beginning (Gen. i. 1–3), a manifestation of God in connection with water. *Then* God, by His Word and His Spirit, dispelled the darkness—*now* the Father speaks, the Son is baptised, and the Holy Spirit overshadows Him—figuring the spiritual translation from darkness to light. Baptism was called of old the Sacrament of light and illumination. We are baptised in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

The water did not sanctify our Lord, but He sanctified water to the mystical washing away of sin.

(6) St. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Acts ii. 41. Those who neglect the Sacraments are not obedient to the teaching of Jesus Christ. If we accept Him as our Master, it is our part to observe His commandments, whether we understand their significance or not. See the story of Naaman. (2 Kings v.)

XVIII.

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Holy Eucharist—Sacrifice (1)

Type

"Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him. And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: am I my brother's keeper? And He said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto Me from the ground." (Gen. iv. 2–10.)

Jesus Christ

"Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar." (St. Matt. xxiii. 34, 35.)

The Soul

"I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving; and will call upon the Name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord, in the sight of all His people: in the courts of the Lord's house, even in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise the Lord." (Ps. cxvi. 15, 16.)

XVIII.

The Holy Eucharist—Sacrifice (1)

THE miracle recorded in the Gospel for this Sunday[1] must not be confused with the similar miracle when our Lord fed the five thousand in the wilderness. It seems probable that the two miracles were wrought nearly at the same spot, in the desert country belonging to Bethsaida. There are points of similarity between the two miracles, but there are also some differences. Here the people had been with our Lord three days "fasting," while nothing of the kind is reported in the earlier miracle; here, instead of the five loaves and the two fishes, there are seven loaves and a "few small fishes"; while the number fed is four thousand instead of five; and the fragments that remained are gathered into seven baskets, whereas, in the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand, they filled twelve baskets.

The disciples seem to have forgotten how our Lord had fed the five thousand; for we are told that they asked our Lord: "From whence can a man satisfy these men with bread here in the wilderness?" "It is evermore thus in times of difficulty and distress. All former deliverances in danger are forgotten; the mighty interpositions of God's hand in former passages of men's lives fall out of their memories. Each new difficulty appears insurmountable; appears as one from which there is no extrication; . . . God may have divided the Red Sea for Israel, yet no sooner are they on the other side, than, because there are no waters to drink, they murmur against Moses, and count that they must perish for thirst,[1] crying, 'Is the Lord among us or not?' or, to adduce a still nearer parallel, once already the Lord had covered the camp with quails,[2] yet for all this even Moses himself cannot believe that He will provide flesh for all that multitude.[3] It is only the man of a full-formed faith, a faith such as the Apostles themselves at this time did not possess, who argues from the past to the future, and truly derives confidence from God's former dealings of faithfulness and love."[4]

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[1] St. Mark viii. 1–9.

These miracles of feeding the multitude with miraculous food have always been considered typical of the Blessed Sacrament—the Bread of Life. It is not therefore surprising to find that, immediately after our Lord had spoken of the manna which came down from heaven to feed Israel in the wilderness as a type of Himself, and had promised to give Himself for the Food of the soul, the same kind of objection presented itself to the incredulous people: "How," they asked, "can this man give us His flesh to eat?"[1] Our Lord offered no further explanation of His words; the result was that "from that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him." Then our Lord turned to His Apostles and asked, "Will ye also go away?" and this gave to St. Peter the opportunity to repeat his former great confession of faith in our Lord, with the additional profession of implicit acceptance of all His teaching: "Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."[2]

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[1] Exod. xvii. 1-7. [2] Exod. xvi. 13. [3] Num. xi. 21, 22.

[4] 1 Sam. xvii. 34, 37; 2 Chron. xvi. 7, 8. Abp. TRENCH, *Notes on the Miracles.*

We have already considered the Holy Eucharist as the covenanted Presence of our Lord with His Church; but it is necessary to repeat that, while we are not called upon to offer any explanation of the *mode* of our Lord's Presence, we are most distinctly called upon to believe in the *reality* of that Presence in the Holy Sacrament. The Church, as a whole, has never insisted on the acceptance of the dogma of transubstantiation, not necessarily implying that it is false, but simply because it attempts to explain the inexplicable—the particular manner or mode by which the Presence of our Lord is brought about. What the whole Church is perfectly clear about is that, at the consecration of the Bread and Wine, our Lord Jesus Christ becomes truly, really present under those outward signs; and that, as a consequence, He is to be adored with supreme worship in the Holy Sacrament even as He is adored in heaven where His Presence is visible and unveiled. The Church does not adore "the Sacrament," but the Presence of her Lord and God in the Sacrament of His Body and Blood. The objective reality of the Presence was so clearly acknowledged in the Primitive Church that it was used as a proof of the greater mystery of our Lord's Incarnation; for how, it was argued, could the Body and Blood of our Lord be present and be adored in the Eucharist, if the Incarnation were denied?

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[1] St. John vi. 49–52.

[2] St. John vi. 66–69.

The Church also teaches that wherever our Lord is present, He is necessarily the one Sacrifice acceptable to God.

In order to understand the Eucharistic Sacrifice, which is the sun and centre of the worship of the Church, we must go back to the first records of Holy Scripture. The first recorded act of worship is an act of sacrifice. "Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door."[1]

Now we naturally ask, How did this knowledge respecting the way of approaching God reach men in those early days? What did Cain and Abel know about sacrifice? Were they told by a special revelation to offer *something*, and *what* they were to offer? There is no recorded decree in the Book of Genesis commanding sacrifice. There may, of course, have been some Divine revelation on the subject, or sacrifice may have been the spontaneous outcome of the desire of the heart to communicate with the Creator. The shepherd felt that to take of his flock and offer it to the unseen Power was the most suitable and childlike acknowledgment of gratitude. The tiller of the ground would also naturally take of his crops and present them to Him Who gave the fruits of the earth in due season. Acts precede words. The instinct of love is to give, and who shall deny that the heart of man may thus early have dimly anticipated something of the great mystery of the love that links the creature with his Creator? We are not told in what *way* the first sacrifices were offered, only that they *were* offered. It would seem as if the details were only so far recorded as to suggest wherein lay the acceptableness of the one offering and the unworthiness of the other. There is no assertion that Abel's offering was in itself acceptable and Cain's displeasing; all we are told is that "the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect." In each case the offerer is named equally with the offering. When the time came for Divine legislation as to the sacrifices of Israel, the fruits of the earth were required for sacrifice as well as sheep and oxen. The latter had a special significance, no doubt, but the produce of the earth had its due place in the sacrifices of the Law.

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[1] Gen. iv. 2-7.

Our Lord found Divine teaching in the sower and the seed, in the vine, and in the fig tree, as well as in the shepherd and his flock. We must therefore seek for the cause of the worthiness and unworthiness of these two sacrifices in the persons who offered rather than in the things they offered. This seems made plain by the words spoken to Cain—"If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door."

In these words we have the primary value of sacrifice very forcibly brought before us. The acceptableness of an offering depends chiefly, if not entirely, on its significance as a representation of the mind of the person who offers. We are taught, too, the righteousness of God. His acceptance of sacrifice is no merely arbitrary selection between one kind of gift and another, but between righteousness and sin.

The story of the first act of worship is one that has its lesson for each individual soul. It proclaims that no offering is of any value but the offering of man's own life in a surrender of obedience to God. We pray, and have no response; we offer gifts spiritual or temporal that are good in themselves, but we gain no supernatural reward, no blessing. We complain; we distrust God and are angry; but all the while "sin lieth at the door," and spoils the offering, deprives the prayer of its power. If our sin lie in nothing else it will be found in the insult offered to God in supposing Him to be an arbitrary Power, caring for the gift rather than for the giver, and to be conciliated by sacrifices and prayers that have no correspondence with our inner self.

This same truth is vividly brought out by the language used by our Lord with regard to Abel. He speaks of him as "righteous Abel."[1] The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says that "by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous."[2] "By faith"! "Without faith it is impossible to please"[3] God, and therefore it may well have been that the sin of Cain lay in distrust of God; in the thought that God could be propitiated by gifts while the spiritual state of the giver mattered not.

The chief lesson therefore that was impressed upon mankind by this first mention of sacrifice would seem to be the all-importance of the offering being representative of the life of the offerer: "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee."[1]

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[1] St. Matt. xxiii. 35. [2] Heb. xi. 4. [3] Heb. xi. 6.

These words of Samuel have a wider application than that which belongs to them as related to the sin of Saul; they proclaim the great truth that all sin is disobedience, and while the sin is not repented of, the sacrifice offered by the sinner cannot be acceptable. All sin is disobedience either to the eternal or the written law. God only rejects the offerings of those who have first of all rejected His commandments: "Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee." Sacrifice should be the outward and visible profession of the surrender of the creature to the Creator, and as such it is of value in God's sight. It is doubtless not without its own significance that Abel offered animate life in sacrifice: in so doing he symbolised more perfectly the idea of sacrifice.

Is there no meaning in the crime that followed the rejection of Cain's sacrifice? "Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous."[1]

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[1] 1 Sam. xv. 22, 23.

By faith and righteousness Abel had already offered his moral life to God, and been accepted. Cain, filled with wrath at the rejection of his own sacrifice, slew his brother; and thus the life-blood of Abel was united with the blood of the lamb he had offered.

From the thought of the sacrifice and death of Abel we naturally turn to the outpouring of that sacred "Blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."[2] The chief priests who sought our Lord's life were conscious that their sacrifices were rejected by God, and so they sought the death of Him in Whom God was well pleased.

But lest the type of the sacrifice of Abel should not be sufficiently apparent, we may learn the same lesson in a slightly different form from the sacrifice required of Abraham. The real sacrifice that God asked was not of Isaac, but of Abraham himself. The surrender of the son presupposed the surrender of the father. Only one who absolutely trusted God, and whose whole heart was given to Him, could entertain the idea of offering that only child—dearer to him than life—one on whom apparently depended all the promises of God. The setting forth on that journey to the hill of sacrifice was only the climax of all the sacrificial faith that had led Abraham to obey God from the first. Consequently when the entire self-oblation of the Father of the

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[1] 1 St. John iii. 12.

[2] Heb. xii. 24.

Faithful was beyond question, his hand was stayed. All had been offered that God demanded in the person who sacrificed, and *now* that could be fittingly expressed in action. The offerer being perfect in self-surrender, God Himself pointed out a victim by which he could express his self-devotion: "The angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from Me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son."[1]

In each of these sacrifices—of Abel and of Abraham—we learn therefore that the value of the sacrifice lay in the dispositions of him who offered. This revelation was the first step in the knowledge of the law of acceptable worship, but it was more; it was a preparation for the understanding of the value of the future oblation of the great High Priest. The perfect holiness of Jesus Christ was typified; God, Who was to give His only Son in sacrifice, was to be known as the All-Holy. Hence, when that Sacrifice is represented, the Church acknowledges the holiness of the unseen High Priest in the words: "Thou only art holy"; and would have us learn that no sacrifice we present to

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[1] Gen. xxii. 11–14.

God will avail unless with it we offer "ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice."

> "Measure thy life by loss instead of gain ;
> Not by the wine drunk, but the wine poured forth ;
> For love's strength standeth in love's sacrifice ;
> And whoso suffers most hath most to give."

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) Ps. l. 5–23. God does demand our worship, but He asks that it shall really represent our devotion to His will.

(2) Ps. li. 15–19. The sacrifices of the heart give value to the Sacrifice of the Altar, but do not render literal sacrifice useless.

(3) Isa. lviii. 1–13. The same essential truth is repeated by the prophet. Prayer and fasting are alike useless if they are not from the heart, and from the heart that strives to do its duty to God and man.

(4) Isa. lviii. 13, 14. Many so-called "Catholics" forget that Sunday is not kept in the right spirit if we seek in it a maximum of pleasure and a minimum of worship. Assisting at a Mass for half an hour in the morning and then spending the day in amusement may be a keeping of the letter of the Church law, but it is assuredly an example of the "letter that killeth." The *heart* cannot be given to God that seeks to give Him the least possible amount of time. Let us make "the Lord's day" our delight, and keep it holy. That does not mean it should be a day of Puritan gloom, but it does mean the service of God should be its chief pleasure.

(5) Micah vi. 6–10. Our conduct in intercourse with one another is always insisted upon in Holy Scripture as of primary importance; "to do justly and to love mercy" is as important as "to walk humbly with thy God."

(6) St. Matt. xxiii. 23. Attention to the *minutiæ* of worship is perfectly right—"These ought ye to have done"—but it is not sufficient; there are more weighty matters, and they ought not to be left undone.

XIX.

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Holy Eucharist—Sacrifice (2)

Type

"It shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover." (Exod. xii. 26, 27.)

Jesus Christ

"He took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is My Body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of Me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in My Blood, which is shed for you." (St. Luke xxii. 19, 20.)

The Soul

"O send out Thy light and Thy truth, that they may lead me, and bring me unto Thy holy hill, and to Thy dwelling. And that I may go unto the altar of God, even unto the God of my joy and gladness; and upon the harp will I give thanks unto Thee, O God, my God." (Ps. xliii. 3, 4.)

XIX.

The Holy Eucharist—Sacrifice (2)

THE Book of Exodus introduces a new epoch in the history of sacrifice. Hitherto it seems as if the person of the offerer had been the prominent thought, now our attention is directed to the offering itself.

In Egypt the decree went forth from God: "All the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, . . . and all the firstborn of beasts"; but the firstborn of the sons of Israel were to be redeemed[1] by the sacrifice of a lamb: "Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year";[2] "And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover, Who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when He smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses."[3] The Passover was "for a memorial," and it was to be observed for ever. Now we may notice two points in connection with the Passover: (1) It was once offered as an actual redemptive sacrifice, but it was to be "for ever" offered as a memorial of that great redemption.

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[1] Exod. xiii. 13.

[2] Exod. xii. 5.

[3] Exod. xii. 26, 27.

(2) The lamb without blemish represented the firstborn son of the family, and the whole family was represented by the eldest son. The paschal lambs therefore represented not only the firstborn sons but the *whole* of the people of Israel. If it seems to us in the present day that all this symbolism is rather fanciful and childish, we must remember that the world was then in its childhood, and was taught in the way that was best suited to its intelligence. What seems to be of permanent value in the early training of God's people is the lesson of self-surrender. The institution of sacrifice kept the claim of God upon the allegiance of His children before the minds of men.

However we may account for the origin of sacrifice, the fact that it appears in all the religions of the world is in itself a witness to its value: sacrifice may well claim to be the intuitive and spontaneous manifestation of the spirit of worship. The legislation of the Mosaic law did but draw out all the symbolism that lay hidden in this primitive idea, and direct it towards the future sacrifice of the Son of Man.

In the Passover the whole Hebrew people were taught to look upon themselves as especially offered to God. They were to learn that life is sacrifice. The citizen as such must not merely work for self, but be prepared to surrender self for the common good. The soldier is perhaps the most splendid embodiment of the idea of sacrifice; next to the soldier come perhaps the physician and the priest; while, among women, the

Sister of Charity must surely hold a place in the foremost rank of those who realise the idea of sacrifice, in seeking the welfare of the world at the cost to themselves of all that the world most prizes.

The soldier seems in time of war to step into the front ranks of the Church militant, since he goes out to offer his life not for any selfish end, but for his fatherland, and therefore indirectly for his God. The followers of Mahomet are taught that they who die in battle go at once to paradise; and from a Christian standpoint there is much to be said for the idea contained somewhat crudely in this belief. The Christian soldier who loses his life on the battlefield has himself perhaps no exalted idea of the value of the sacrifice he makes; but none the less his heroism is linked to the great sacrifice offered by the Captain of our salvation. His response to the call to battle is the supreme acceptance of duty, and duty well done is closely allied with religion. Nor does it detract from the value of heroic duty that it is performed more or less as a matter of course. That merely proves that a man's moral life is often on a higher level than he himself is aware of. There are doubtless degrees in the conscious recognition of kinship between duty and religion, but God, Who reads the heart, probably sees much more than man can express; and where we often recognise only natural virtue, He is able to see the influence of His Holy Spirit. This may be the meaning of His own words: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."[1] It is evident from the context that this was an unconscious service of Christ, not an intentional recognition of our Lord in His poor and suffering members.

His words are the recognition of actions done from a sense of kindness or duty, inspired doubtless by that "honest and good heart" that often unconsciously derives its inspiration from the Holy Spirit. The question, "Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, and fed Thee? or thirsty, and gave Thee drink?" has doubtless been asked by many a simple soul. Who shall dare to say that our Lord in the judgment will not reply: "In the field of battle, when wounded and near to death, you shared the last drop of water with a suffering comrade"? or, "When you tended the poor and the sick; when you cheered the prisoner, and encouraged the despairing to hope on and persevere in the daily struggle of life: it was for them you did these things, but I was there unseen and even unthought of; and in the book of eternity I have written: 'Ye have done it unto Me.'"

Taken in this sense, sacrifice is indeed the expression of human life approaching God in acceptable service.

But to return to the Passover as a type of the Sacrifice of the Cross. It was clearly at once a propitiatory and a redemptive sacrifice when it was first offered.

In this sense it could never be repeated. Israel came out of Egypt but once, and but once did the angel of death go through the land, slaying all who were not redeemed from death by the paschal lamb and its protecting blood.

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[1] St. Matt. xxv. 40.

When the Word was made Flesh, all was fulfilled that had been typified as to the perfection of the priest and victim in the sacrifices of the Old Testament.

Jesus Christ came as the great High Priest, perfect with all the perfection of God, while at the same time He united this perfection with a spotless human nature. He lived a life of self-sacrifice, and He willed to carry this sacrifice to the utmost limit, by freely offering His life upon the Cross. He allowed Himself to be known as the "Lamb of God," because He willed in His offering of Himself to represent all the children of God—the whole human race. He became the "firstborn among many brethren,"[1] the one representative "Lamb," Who gathered up into Himself all mankind, and offered their allegiance to God in His oblation of Himself.

This sacrifice was indeed "once offered" for propitiation and redemption, and it could necessarily never be repeated. The Son of God offered Himself as a Lamb without spot. His life was laid by Him at the feet of God, and all our lives were redeemed from the curse of the destroyer. His Blood was sprinkled, and became the ransom of the world.[2]

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[1] Rom. viii. 29.

[2] In the Greek Anthology (*Anthologia Palatina*) among the "Christian

This oblation of Himself once offered, He willed should be for ever commemorated and re-presented. The Jewish Church offered year by year an actual sacrifice of the paschal lamb. The motive, however, of this sacrifice—the idea—was not the same as that of the first Passover in Egypt. *Then* it was for deliverance, afterwards it was for a commemoration of that deliverance; but both then and afterwards the lamb was really offered, and its repeated oblation continually invoked God's protection upon His people. It set forth God's past mercies, and enabled Israel to abide continually under the shelter of that past redemption.

Even so our Divine Lord willed not only to offer Himself once upon the Cross for propitiation and redemption, but to leave us His Presence in the Blessed Sacrament to be "a perpetual memory (memorial) of that His precious death until His coming again."[1] This continual memorial is unlike the yearly sacrifice of the Passover, inasmuch as our

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Epigrams" is one (57)—"To the Lamb of God," E*ἰς τὸν ἀμνὸν* Θεοῦ—which expresses this idea.

ψυχῆς ἐν φλιῆσιν ἐμῆς σωτήριον αἷμα ἀμνοῦ
ὀλοθρεύων, φεῦγε, μὴ ἐγγὺς ἴθι.

"The saving blood of the Lamb is on the threshold of my soul,
Fly, exterminator; come not near!"

And another epigram (53), "Christ has abolished the Lamb that the law prescribed; and He Himself, Who is the Victim and the Priest, offers an immortal sacrifice."

[1] Prayer of Consecration.

Lord does not of course continually die: "He died unto sin once."[1] It resembles, however, the Passover, not only as a commemoration of the past, but also because it is a true offering of the Lamb of God, Who is "verily and indeed" present in the Blessed Sacrament. In heaven our Lord continually presents Himself before God for us—He abides "a Priest for ever,"[2] and His offering is no new sacrifice, or even a repetition of the Sacrifice of the Cross, but the presentation of Himself, the "Lamb as it had been slain."[3] As in heaven, so on earth, the same Lamb of God is re-presented to the Father, and when He is so presented, He is necessarily truly offered. The Holy Eucharist is thus not only a memorial of the past, but also a pleading of the great Sacrifice of the Cross, and an impetration of all that was then merited. The Church prays to the Father that, "through faith" in the Precious Blood of Christ, "we and all Thy whole Church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of His Passion."

Thus by the Eucharistic Sacrifice the Church draws virtue from the Sacrifice of the Cross, and from that boundless store of merit obtains the special gifts and graces we need for our daily life.

It is evident, therefore, that the value of the Eucharist in itself does not depend on the earthly, but the heavenly Priest. Jesus Christ is the Priest and the Victim; and therefore the Eucharist has an efficacy of its own. For this reason it obtains help and grace for those for whom it is offered sacrificially, if they are capable of receiving such help. The earthly priest may be most unworthy; he may gain for himself no grace at all; but since he is merely the instrument, and his offering is not his own, but the offering of the Body of the Lord, the sacrifice has still its value and its power, and applies the merits of Christ to all who are prepared to make use of them.[1] In the language of the Schoolmen, it has *ex opere operato* power with God. On the other hand the reception of the gifts and graces for which the Eucharist is offered—the application of the merits of the Cross—depends upon the spiritual condition of those for whom it is pleaded. The Eucharist is no charm that can draw down the Divine grace upon those who do not also with it present themselves—their "souls and bodies"—to God.

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[1] Rom. vi. 10. [2] Ps. cx. 4. [3] Rev. v. 6.

The same is true of the Sacrifice of the Cross. It is of infinite value, but its efficacy for each individual depends on faith. The Blood of Christ was shed—but it only cleanses from sin those who desire to be cleansed. According to our faith it is done to us. To plead the merits of the Passion without striving to know something of self-surrender to God is to plead in vain. The reception of the grace of the Sacrifice depends, therefore, in any given instance upon the faith of the recipient; that is to say, the Sacraments work, not only *ex opere operato* (by the work wrought), but *ex opere operantis* (by the work of the worker).

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[1] See Art. xxvi., *Of the Unworthiness of Ministers.*

From Abel and Abraham we may learn to let the Sacrifice of Christ gather up our own life into its power. If, like Cain, we venture to offer sacrifice that is no expression of our own obedience, then, though the sacrifice be itself most acceptable to God, He will deny our right through it to seek His favour. We must identify ourselves with Jesus Christ if we would share in His merits. It is, of course, unnecessary to say that we can do this only by His grace and Spirit, but as He never withholds His Spirit from those who truly seek Him we are without excuse if we cannot acceptably draw near to plead the Sacrifice of the Cross in its Eucharistic memorial. Daily the Church on earth joins with the Church in heaven in pleading the Sacrifice once offered. She pleads no new sacrifice, but the one Sacrifice; for He Who on Calvary made a "full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world"[1] is truly present, and re-presents Himself—the "Lamb as it had been slain"—on earth as He does in heaven. Here, under the veils of the elements; there, without other veil than that of His Sacred Humanity.

It follows from what has been said that the Eucharist must be the central act around which is gathered the worship of the Church. By it we pay to God the honour due to His infinite majesty; we offer Him thanks and praise for His goodness and mercy; we re-present the propitiation for sin made on Calvary and call it into action; and we pray to Him for all our needs and for the wants of others, temporal and spiritual. In this way the Eucharist gathers up the virtue that was mystically distributed under the different sacrifices of the old Law. The whole burnt-offering, by its complete destruction, expressed the supreme dominion of God; the sin-offerings expiated offences against the law; the peace-offerings were made as thanksgivings for benefits received, and perhaps also to beg for fresh favours. Those old sacrifices were, however, mere types and shadows of the one offering of the Cross, and therefore the Eucharist fulfils these purposes not in itself apart from the Sacrifice of the Cross, but as the memorial of that Sacrifice, and the means ordained by God for applying its efficacy to all the children of men, "alway, even unto the end of the world."[1] The Presence and therefore the offering of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament is allied to the Presence and offering of our Lord at the right hand of the Majesty on high; and both the Eucharistic and the heavenly presentation are related to Calvary, and represent the offering there "once made."

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[1] Consecration Prayer.

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[1] Art. xxxi. condemns as a vulgar error that which once used to be held, namely, that Christ died on the Cross to atone for *original* sin only, and instituted the Mass to atone for actual sin. Hence the Article rightly denies this error, and truly teaches that "the offering of Christ once made is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction, for *all* the sins of the whole world, both original and actual, and there is none *other* satisfaction for sin but that alone. *Wherefore*," etc.

If only bread and wine were offered in the Eucharist, and not the Body of Christ, it would, of course, be a new sacrifice.

"Once, only once, and once for all,
His precious life He gave;
Before the Cross our spirits fall,
And own it strong to save.

"'One offering, single and complete,'
With lips and heart we say;
But what He never can repeat
He shows forth day by day.

"For as the priest of Aaron's line
Within the Holiest stood,
And sprinkled all the mercy-shrine
With sacrificial blood,

"So He, Who once atonement wrought,
Our Priest of endless power,
Presents Himself for those He bought
In that dark noontide hour.

"His Manhood pleads where now it lives,
On Heav'n's eternal Throne,
And where in mystic rite He gives
Its Presence to His own.

"And so we show Thy death, O Lord,
Till Thou again appear;
And feel, when we approach Thy Board,
We have an Altar here."

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) Exod. xxv. 21, 22. The ark, a type of the Blessed Sacrament. It was the covenanted meeting-place of God and man—the mercy-seat. The ark wrongly used brought death. (Num. iv. 15, 20; 2 Sam. vi. 6–9; cf. 1 Cor. xi. 29.)

(2) Lev. xxiv. 5–10. "The bread for a memorial, even an offering made by fire unto the Lord," was to be renewed every Sabbath for "an everlasting covenant." Do I value the memorial of a better covenant? and show my gratitude by being present every Sunday when it is offered?

(3) Lev. vii. 11–22. The peace-offering represents the whole Incarnate life of our Lord. This is typified by the parts of the body named. The peace-offering—a sacrifice—but also to be eaten. We offer Him, Who is "our Peace," as our great thanksgiving, and for all our needs. (Lev. vii. 12–16.)

(4) Gen. xiv. 18–21. "King of Salem." Salem means "Peace"; and Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace of Whom Melchizedek was a type. The mystic "Bread and Wine" were the offering of this priest. (See Ps. cx. 4.)

(5) Heb. vii. Here we are again taught to see Christ in the characters of the Old Testament, and to draw spiritual lessons from its narratives. Christ is eternally a Priest, and for ever offers Himself before the Father—making intercession for us. "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

(6) Rev. v. 6–14. The worship of heaven gathers round the altar of the Lamb. "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

XX.

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Confirmation

Type

" Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly; for Manasseh was the firstborn. And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before Whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads." (Gen. xlviii. 14-16.)

Jesus Christ

"Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them. (St. Mark x. 14-16.)

The Soul

"The eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." (Deut. xxxiii. 27.)

XX.

Confirmation

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH, in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Seven Churches, draws out at some length the significance of the number *seven* in Holy Scripture. "Nor should it be left unnoticed," he writes, "that the word seven is bound up in the Hebrew word signifying an oath, or a covenant confirmed by an oath. A careful induction from all the passages where this number (seven) cannot be regarded as fortuitous, but is evidently of Divine ordinance and appointment, will leave no doubt that it claims throughout Scripture to be considered as the covenant number, the sign and signature of God's covenant relation to mankind, and, above all, to that portion of mankind with which this relation is not potential merely, but actual, namely, the Church."

From the Apostolic age down to the present day, the two greater Sacraments (Baptism and the Eucharist) have always held a place quite apart. Their dignity far exceeds that of the "other five commonly called Sacraments."

1. Because they alone are "Sacraments of the

gospel" in the sense that their outward sign (their matter and form) is recorded by the holy Evangelists as instituted by Christ Himself.

2. Because these two alone are generally (*i.e.* for all persons) necessary to salvation.

3. Because Baptism bestows life, and the Eucharist actually contains the life of the soul, Jesus Christ, and not merely His grace, as the other Sacraments.

The Council of Trent decreed—

"Canon III.—If any one shall say that the Sacraments are equal to each other, in such wise as that one is not in any way more worthy than another, let him be anathema."

Our Twenty-fifth Article of Religion states—

"There are two Sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the gospel, that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord"; and it goes on to add that "those five, commonly called Sacraments, have not the like nature of Sacraments with Baptism and the Lord's Supper, for that they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God."

What the Church of England insists on is the altogether unique dignity of the two Sacraments which have "an outward sign or ceremony ordained of God," and are "generally necessary to salvation." One of the Homilies (see Article xxxv.) speaks "of the *Sacrament* of Matrimony"; and again, because Absolution has no outward sign ordained of God recorded in Scripture, another Homily says, "Therefore Absolution is no *such Sacrament* as Baptism and the Communion are"; again, of Holy Orders, in yet another Homily we read, "Neither it, nor any Sacrament else, be *such* Sacraments as Baptism and the Communion are."

Bishop Jeremy Taylor says—

"Let it be clearly understood it is none of the doctrine of the Church of England that there are two Sacraments only, but that of those rituals commanded in Scripture, which ecclesiastical use calls Sacraments, by a word of art, *two only are generally necessary to salvation*."[1]

The Church of England at the present day prescribes matter and form in the Book of Common Prayer for all the seven Sacraments, except Unction of the Sick.

When, therefore, the Church teaches that a Sacrament must be "instituted by Christ," she does not mean it is essential that we should find the outward sign and form of words used in its administration *recorded in Holy Scripture* as "ordained of God." These may have been among those "things pertaining to the kingdom of God," of which our Lord spoke to His Apostles before His Ascension. To them He committed the substantial rite, and to His Church—His mystical Body—He entrusted the expression of this substantial gift in its outward manifestation by matter and form (*i.e.* the sign and the words used in the Sacrament).

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[1] TAYLOR'S *Dissuasive*, p. 240.

The Anglican Communion makes Confirmation, in fact or desire, a condition of admission to Holy Communion.[1]

We will now try to gather from Holy Scripture some teaching as to this means of grace.

In the Apostolic and Primitive Church, Confirmation followed immediately upon Holy Baptism, and was regarded as its completion.

This order is still observed in the Eastern Church, and is so far recognised by our custom in the Anglican Communion that Confirmation is, as we have said, required before admission is granted to Holy Communion.

The rite now known as Confirmation presents a singular instance of the continued use of a symbolic act in the midst of almost every possible diversity of practice, belief, and even terminology. The one common element throughout has been the imposition of hands, as the sign of the bestowal of some spiritual gift. In this custom the Christian Sacrament of Confirmation is linked with the immemorial past, both among Jews and Gentiles.

The laying on of hands has from the earliest times been associated with the act of benediction, and the setting apart of those who are called to some special religious work. In the Book of Genesis we read that "Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, . . . and his left hand upon Manasseh's head. . . . And he blessed them."[1] Again, when Joshua was to be appointed to succeed Moses as the leader of God's people, we read that "the Lord said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay thine hand upon him: and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation; and give him a charge in their sight."[2] In another book we are told, "Joshua . . . was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands upon him."[3] In each of these references to Joshua the laying on of hands is mentioned in connection with his possession of the "Spirit." It is not said that the gift of the Spirit was imparted by the imposition of hands, probably because the Sacraments of the old Law did not bestow grace *ex opere operato.* We find, however, throughout the Old Testament that the laying on of hands was a ceremonial observance symbolical of spiritual gifts, or of some authority bestowed.

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[1] This passage, on the number of the Sacraments, slightly altered, is from my book, *The Soul, Here and Hereafter*.

This is significant, because the Church teaches that the Holy Spirit is given in Confirmation through the outward sign of the laying on of the Bishop's hands.

God alone can institute a means of grace, but He may do this mediately or immediately.

In the case of the two great Sacraments—Baptism and the Eucharist—we learn from the holy Gospels that their outward sign was chosen by Jesus Christ Himself. He named the water of Baptism and the bread and wine of the Eucharist as the channels of His covenanted grace. But it is otherwise in the lesser Sacraments.

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[1] Gen. xlviii. 14, 20. [2] Num. xxvii. 18, 19. [3] Deut. xxxiv. 9.

Confirmation was probably among "the things pertaining to the kingdom of God,"[1] of which our Lord spoke to His Apostles during the great forty days. What the Apostles did they did by Christ's command and by the guidance of the Holy Spirit. To His Apostles He had given the direction, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you";[2] and He had already told them that "the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, Whom the Father will send in My Name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."[3]

Some theologians indeed teach that our Lord Himself prefigured this Sacrament when He said, "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. . . . And He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them."[4] But whether this be so or not, it is certain that no outward sign ordained merely by human authority could be the means of conveying supernatural grace; so that when we read that "through laying on of the Apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given,"[5] we may be sure the Apostles were acting in obedience to an unrecorded command of Jesus Christ.

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[1] Acts i. 3. [2] St. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. [3] St. John xiv. 26.
[4] St. Mark x. 14, 16. [5] Acts viii. 18.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews "the laying on of hands" is mentioned as one of the "principles of the doctrine of Christ." The writer of the Epistle reproves those whom He addresses for their backwardness in the knowledge of the faith. He desires to cease to speak of the first principles of the doctrine of Christ and press on unto perfection; "not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment."[1] Even so the Church supposes the reception of these truths at the outset of the Christian life, and would have her children go forward to the knowledge of the deeper mysteries of the faith. It is not, of course, meant that these first principles are unimportant or can be neglected. They are of vital importance, but the Christian must learn that when the foundation is laid it is laid for a purpose—that upon it we may build up ourselves in our "most holy faith";[2] or, as St. Peter says, "Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity." Here we have the steps towards perfection, leading the soul up to the perfect union with God through love.

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[1] Heb. vi. 1, 2.

[2] St. Jude 20.

St. Peter concludes with these words, "For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth."[1] The value of the Sacraments lies in this, that they are Divinely ordained means by which the desired end may be attained. In the Book of the Acts of the Apostles we learn that the Apostles laid their hands on those who had been baptised: "Now when the Apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. . . . Then laid they their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost."[2] And again at Ephesus St. Paul preached the need of Christian baptism, and the people, we are told, "when they heard this . . . were baptised in the Name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them: and they spake with tongues, and prophesied."[1]

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[1] 2 St. Peter i. 5–12.

[2] Acts viii. 14, 15, 17.

The title of our own Confirmation Office in the Book of Common Prayer, "The Laying on of Hands on those that are baptised," as well as the prayer, "Almighty and everliving God, Who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these Thy servants by water and the Holy Ghost, . . . strengthen them, we beseech Thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost the Comforter," are each suggestive of the record in the Acts of the Apostles.

There are, however, two difficulties to be considered. In the first place, according to the teaching of the Church, the baptised are born of water and of the Spirit. How then can the gift of the Holy Ghost be said to be imparted by Confirmation?

Secondly, the Apostolic laying on of hands communicated not only the Holy Spirit, but also certain miraculous gifts that are not now given in Confirmation.

In reply to the first difficulty, St. Thomas teaches that in the natural order one needs not only to be born but to grow to a full stature. Even so we need to receive spiritual life by Baptism which is spiritual regeneration, and by Confirmation we are led towards our perfect growth in Christ. The Holy Spirit, Who descends on the baptismal waters to impart to them the power of purification, comes in Confirmation with the increase of His grace. In Baptism we are given life, that we may live; in Confirmation strength, that we may fight. In Baptism we are cleansed, in Confirmation we are made strong.[1]

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[1] Acts xix. 5, 6.

In the Primitive Church the fact that Confirmation followed immediately after Baptism contributes to the difficulty we find in making any very clear distinction between the Holy Spirit's work in regeneration and Confirmation.

When the two Sacraments had been received it was held that the full outpouring of the Holy Ghost had been bestowed for all the work of the spiritual life; and it would be perhaps more to the purpose to impress this upon people to-day, than to waste time in the endeavour to elaborate arguments concerning subtle distinctions in matters that must lie outside our knowledge, since nothing absolutely clear is revealed on this subject. With regard to the fact that marvellous gifts appear to have accompanied the Apostolic laying on of hands that followed Baptism, it is usually answered that such gifts were needful at the first preaching of the faith, to remove all doubt as to the presence of supernatural power in the Church. "But this was an accident; and, just as the miraculous signs promised at the end of St. Mark's Gospel to those 'who believe' afterwards ceased without prejudice to faith, so when miraculous signs no longer accompanied the imposition of hands, Confirmation still bestowed the presence of the Holy Ghost in increased measure, it still gave this power and courage to make confession which will always be essential to the Christian calling. . . . In allusion to this Sacrament of Confirmation, the Epistle to the Hebrews describes Christians as 'partakers of the Holy Ghost,'[1] and, with at least a probable reference to Confirmation, St. Paul tells Christians that they were 'sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.'[2] Thus miraculous gifts were only intended to make men recognise and believe in a presence of the Holy Ghost, which was afterwards to be recognised by faith alone."[3]

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[1] *Summa Theo.*, pars iii. Q. lxxii. art. i.

An almost parallel instance may be found in the distinction between the temporary miraculous gifts that belonged to the Apostles as the first Bishops of the Church, and the permanent gifts which they transmitted to their successors.

At the very outset of Christianity miracles were needed to witness to those who necessarily could not foresee how, later on, the triumph of the faith would witness to itself. Even before St. John was called to his rest Christianity became its own witness. Within ten years of the Crucifixion—when all hope had seemed lost—a powerful Christian community had been established at Antioch, the capital of Syria. Throughout Asia Minor the faith made rapid progress, while in Rome and the West it could claim vast numbers of adherents. These results, and those which followed later, must have produced in thoughtful converts a firm conviction that a Divine power was present and energising in the midst of an apparently feeble Church. The foolish, the base, the weak, and the despised things of the world, had, despite all opposition and persecution, been strangely triumphant over all that the world held to be wise, mighty, noble, and powerful. As age followed age this witness of inherent miraculous power made actual miracles less and less needful, until in the present day they are seldom, if ever, wrought. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."[1] These words contain a truth that exactly applies to the state of mind of those who "require a sign"[2] in the present day—only in addition to Moses and the prophets we have the witness of nineteen centuries to the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We can but exclaim with the perpetual miracle of Christianity in our minds, "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

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[1] Heb. vi. 4. [2] Eph. i. 13. [3] *A Catholic Dictionary.*

Not without typical meaning was it that "the Lord said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay thine hand upon him; . . . and thou shalt put *some* of thine honour upon him."[3] God willed that the successors of the Apostles should receive some of the honour He had given to the Twelve, and that some of the grace that accompanied the first laying on of their hands should be transmitted for ever in the mystery of Confirmation. Let us ask ourselves whether we have been acting in the power of the Holy Ghost, or have allowed His Presence to exert scarcely any influence upon our life. It is not enough to receive the gifts of God, we must daily increase in them. Let our prayer be—

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[1] St. Luke xvi. 31. [2] 1 Cor. i. 22. [3] Num. xxvii. 18, 20.

"Defend me, O Lord, with Thy heavenly grace, that I may continue Thine for ever; and daily increase in Thy Holy Spirit more and more, until I come unto Thine everlasting kingdom. Amen."[1]

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[1] See *The Order for Confirmation* in Book of Common Prayer.

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) Isaiah xi. 1–5. *The Spirit of Wisdom*—teaching us to choose God. Wisdom is the illumination of the intellect accompanied by charity enkindling the heart. The Gifts are named in a descending scale. Wisdom is the highest, and "the fear of the Lord" is the lowest—"the beginning of wisdom."

(2) Eph. i. 18, 19. *The Spirit of Understanding*—opening to us the mysteries of faith. It enables us to understand the meaning of what we believe; to penetrate below the surface of truth.

(3) Rom. viii. 14–18. *The Spirit of Counsel*—guiding us amid the difficulties of life, saying to us, "This is the way, walk ye in it." (Isa. xxx. 21.)

The Holy Spirit is the true Director of souls.

(4) Eph. iii. 14–21. *The Spirit of Ghostly Strength*—to enable us to overcome temptations. We are "strengthened with might by His Spirit," so that all things become possible. (Cf. 1 Cor. x. 13; Phil. iv. 13.)

(5) 1 Cor. ii. 11, 12. *The Spirit of Knowledge* and *True Godliness*. "The Holy Ghost teacheth us" to *know* God's will; and (1 Tim. iv. 8) enables us to perform it. By "bodily exercise" is meant bodily mortifications; these are useless if the soul does not seek true godliness.

(6) Heb. xii. 28. *The Spirit of Holy Fear*. "Unto man He said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil, that is understanding." (Job xxviii. 28.) By "the fear of the Lord" is meant filial, not servile, fear; the fear that springs from love and reverence.

XXI.

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Penance

Type

"It shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing." (Lev. v. 5.)

Jesus Christ

"He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." (St. John xx. 22, 23.)

The Soul

"I will acknowledge my sin unto Thee, and mine unrighteousness have I not hid. I said, I will confess my sins unto the Lord; and so Thou forgavest the wickedness of my sin." (Ps. xxxii. 5, 6.)

XXI.

Penance

IN the Gospel for this Sunday[1] we have the humanity and Divinity of Jesus Christ set before us.

Our Lord was on His way to Jerusalem. The hour of His Passion had almost come. Surrounded by a crowd of enthusiastic followers, His progress towards the holy City seemed to be a triumphal march to victory. But our Lord was not deceived; "He knew what was in man,"[2] and so we are told that "when He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it."

Bishop Hall, in his *Contemplations*, exclaims, "On three cities, Nazareth, Capernaum, Jerusalem, Thou bestowedst the most time and cost of preaching, and miraculous works. Yet in all three Thou receivedst not strange entertainment only, but hostile. In Nazareth they would have cast Thee down headlong from the mount; in Capernaum they would have bound Thee; in Jerusalem they crucified Thee at the last, and now are amazed at Thy Presence. Those places and persons that have the greatest helps and privileges afforded them are not always the most answerable in the return of thankfulness. Christ being among us does not make us happy, but our welcoming Him."

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[1] St. Luke xix. 41–47.

[2] St. John ii. 25.

Our Lord's Divine knowledge could read the spiritual ruin that was concealed under the fair exterior of the outward beauty of the City of God. His human Heart could feel tender compassion for the misery that in a few years' time would overtake that doomed city. Already He sees it hemmed round by the Roman army, its inhabitants perishing by famine and the sword, and its magnificent Temple and buildings destroyed by fire—utterly overthrown—so that not one stone remained upon another. His visit to Jerusalem was a last grace. He knew it would be rejected, and His own death would seal the fate of the apostate nation. Very soon the veil of the Temple would be rent; and, before many years were passed, the old worship would be overthrown, the Divine Presence for ever withdrawn; and from that place where God had been pleased for so long to be present to the prayer of His people, His glory would utterly depart.[1]

As Christ drew nigh to the city with all its accumulation of sins, even so does He draw nigh to the individual soul, calls it to repentance, offers it His forgiveness.

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[1] Among the portents which took place before the taking of Jerusalem by the Romans, the following is mentioned by Josephus. "During the Festival which is called Pentecost, the priests, by night, having come into the inner Temple to perform their services, as was their custom, reported that they perceived, first a motion, a noise, and then they heard as it were a great crowd, saying, 'Let us depart hence.'"

Before ever the soul cries out for pardon, He calls upon it to repent. Jesus "beheld the city," not in anger, but in sorrow. Even so He looked upon Peter after the threefold denial, and even so He looks upon each soul that He may convert it, so that like St. Peter—who, seeing the Master's eye fixed reproachfully upon him, "went out and wept bitterly"—the soul may seek in contrition the grace of reconciliation.

In order that His forgiveness might be within the reach of all, our Divine Lord left the power to remit sin in His Church.

There are two kinds of sin—original and actual. Our Lord therefore gave two covenanted channels of pardon; Baptism for the remission chiefly of original sin,[1] and Absolution for remission of actual offences. Baptism can only be received once; Absolution may be repeated as often as a sinner turns to God in true repentance.

In the course of time the process through which a penitent passed in order to receive the forgiveness of sin through this specially covenanted channel of ministerial absolution was known as the Sacrament—or Mystery—of Penance.

It derived this title from the penitential discipline, or penance, which the penitent had to undergo before he could receive absolution. A part of this discipline, but only a part, was the confession of sin.

[1] Baptism also remits actual sin in those who are baptised after having reached the age of reason.

Our Lord instituted this Sacrament when He breathed upon the Apostles and said, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained"; or, perhaps, as Dr. Mason well says, "It would be truer to say that" these words "conveyed the power of which this Sacrament is a special exercise."[1]

Before we consider in outline the various ways in which the Church has exercised this power of absolution, it will be well briefly to notice the teaching of the Old and New Testaments as to the pardon of sin.

If we turn to the Book of Genesis we see that confession of sin has been required by God from the beginning: "Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? . . . And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done?"

To Cain also the question was put, "What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto Me from the ground."

When we come to the regulations laid down in the ceremonial law, the same duty of confession is insisted upon. Even they who "sin through ignorance"[2] have to bring an offering for atonement; and it is prescribed that if a man commit certain sins, "it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing."[3] At the yearly feast of expiation it was ordained that "Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, in all their sins."[1] This was a figure, representing the work of our Lord, of Whom it was said, "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."[2] Again, God promises that He will turn away His anger from the people who have sinned against Him, "if they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against Me."[3]

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[1] *Faith of the Gospel*, p. 335. [2] Lev. iv. 2. [3] Lev. v. 5.

We have here two kinds of confession of sin, the one general and the other particular,[4] and we learn that, from the first, confession of sin has been a condition of pardon. The knowledge of sin is to lead to sorrow or contrition, and this in turn is to lead to confession before God of general unworthiness and of the particular offences that have been committed.

The fact that in the Old Testament this confession was connected with a ceremonial of purification and pardon may well lead us to expect that He Who came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it, would institute some Sacraments or Mysteries in His Church for the covenanted remission of sins. We have already noticed that this expectation has been justified by the institution of Holy Baptism, which is primarily the means ordained for the remission of original sin; and by the gift to the Church of the power of Absolution, to be employed for the remission of actual sin, upon such conditions as the Church might lay down.

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[1] Lev. xvi. 21. [2] Isa. liii. 6. [3] Lev. xxvi. 40.

[4] For examples see Passages for Reading, p. 388.

The immediate preparation for the coming of Jesus Christ was by the preaching of the baptism of repentance by John the Baptist. Those who gave heed to his words "were baptised of him in Jordan, confessing their sins."[1] Even so when the Apostles had gone forth to their work, endued with the plenitude of power bestowed upon them by their Lord, filled with the Pentecostal gifts of the Spirit, we read that many to whom they preached, and who witnessed their miracles, were filled with fear, and "the Name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. And many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their deeds."[2]

It would be, however, a great mistake to suppose that the Apostles required after Holy Baptism that their converts should continually come to them for Confession and Absolution. There was no such use in the Apostolic or Primitive Church of the Sacrament of Penance, as we are familiar with in the present day. Confession of sin, as well as of sinfulness, was always required as a condition of pardon; but for twelve hundred years after Christ there was no obligation to make this confession to any but God alone, except in the case when public scandal had been given by the three great sins of apostasy from Christianity, adultery, and murder.[3] Other sins were, the Church taught, forgiven by confession to God by prayer—especially the Lord's Prayer—and almsgiving. When confession was made of the notable crimes already mentioned, it was made in the presence of the congregation, and was followed by a time of penance, during which the "penitent" was forbidden to approach the Holy Communion. When the penance had been duly performed the penitent was reconciled by the bishop or priest through imposition of hands and the prayers of the people. This solemn form of reconciliation was for a long while only allowed to a penitent once. If he fell again he was excluded from reception of the Eucharist until the time of his death, when the Nicene Council ordered that Communion should never be withheld from a penitent, no matter how great or frequent his crimes might have been.

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[1] St. Matt. iii. 6.

[2] Acts xix. 17, 18.

[3] It is impossible in these short readings to offer proofs for all the

It would seem that during this period the faithful who felt their conscience troubled by weighty sins, but who had not given scandal, were allowed, and perhaps by degrees encouraged, to confess in public, and voluntarily submit to penance. During the first centuries all confessions and reconciliations were public, but as the first fervour and charity of the faithful died out, it was found that more harm than good resulted

statements made, or to qualify them. There was no absolutely uniform practice throughout the first centuries of the Church in regard to Penance. Those who would examine the subject in a brief form may be referred to Dr. Pusey's masterly summary of the Patristic teaching given in the Oxford translation of Tertullian's works, pp. 370–409.

from this practice. The Church then appointed certain of the clergy to deal with penitents privately. It is, however, as Dr. Pusey writes, abundantly clear that the Primitive Church "knew of no other confession," as in any sense obligatory, "than that of great sins, for which men were excommunicated, and that lesser sins were believed to be remitted on daily confession to God only." Indeed, no such practice was known as binding upon the faithful until the thirteenth century, when it was introduced at the command of Pope Innocent III.

The Council of Châlons in 813 says—

"Some assert that we should confess our sins to God alone, but some think that they should be confessed to the priests; each of which practices is followed, not without great fruit, in Holy Church. . . . Confession made to God purges sins, but that made to the priest teaches how they are to be purged." This former opinion is also mentioned without reprobation by Peter Lombard in the twelfth century. St. Thomas says, however—writing in the thirteenth century—that what had once been a lawful opinion was, in his time, on account of the decision of Pope Innocent III. (that all should confess at least once a year to a priest), to be accounted heresy; and he maintained that the necessity of confessing mortal sins after Baptism exists by Divine, and not merely by Church law.

This view was accepted from the thirteenth century throughout the West, and is still the teaching of the Roman Church, and, since the Council of Florence, has been the theory of the Eastern Church also. At the Reformation the Church in England reverted to the freedom allowed up to the thirteenth century, and in her first English Prayer Book required "such as shall be satisfied with a general confession, not to be offended with them that do use, to their further satisfying, the auricular and secret confession to the priest;[1] nor those which think needful or convenient, for the quietness of their own consciences, particularly to open their sins to the priest, to be offended with them that are satisfied with their humble confession to God, and the general confession to the Church. But in all things to follow and keep the rule of charity, and every man to be satisfied with his own conscience, not judging other men's minds or consciences; whereas he hath no warrant of God's word to the same."[2] This has remained the practice of the Church of England. She makes known to all the liberty they have to use this means of grace before each Communion, and in the case of the sick directs that the sick person is to be "moved"[3] by the priest "to make a special confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter." It certainly may be argued that "weighty matter"[1] should trouble the conscience as much in health as in sickness, and the Church in our land would doubtless *move* all with such troubled consciences to make a special confession of their sins.

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[1] "Auricular confession is still unknown to the sects parted at an early period from the Greek Communion, the Ethiopians, St. Thomas' Christians, Babylonians, Armenians, Jacobites. It appears also that in the time of Theodorus, our Archbishop (of Canterbury), it was not in the Greek Church itself."—*Tertullian*, Dr. PUSEY.

[2] Second Exhortation, First Prayer Book, Edw. VI. 1549.

[3] Persuaded.

The Church of England retains the declaratory form of absolution in the same form as the Church of Rome: "Ego te absolvo"—"I absolve thee from all thy sins."

While, therefore, all are to be instructed as to their right to this Sacrament if they feel the need for it, none may be compelled to use it. Indeed, nothing could be more harmful than to press or over-persuade persons, especially the young, who have not a heartfelt desire for sacramental confession, to go through the form of it. Such indiscreet persuasion could only result in dangerous unreality; and, as the lamentations of Roman Catholic writers plainly show, lead to a sacrilegious abuse of the Sacrament, with great injury to conscience.[2] Faith is requisite in the use of all the means of grace; and, for pardon of sin, sorrow and the will to amend are also required. Those who lack these requisite conditions cannot derive benefit from the Sacrament. Indeed, a confession made without these dispositions is of no value, the absolution is null and void, and the probable effect will be to hinder the impenitent "penitent" from an intelligent use of Penance in after years, and involve him in the guilt of sacrilegious Communions. It would seem that the safest way is to teach plainly the lawfulness and use of the Sacrament, leaving it entirely to the individual conscience to act upon the teaching or not, as it may judge aright. We are of necessity committed to the discipline of that portion of Christendom in which our lot is cast. Even in the Roman Communion there is no obligation to confess any but mortal sins to the priest; but, as it is so often very difficult to decide whether a sin is mortal or venial, the practice has grown up of confessing venial sins also; mortal sins being called *necessary* matter, venial sins *sufficient* matter, of confession. We may also remember that in the Roman Communion it is taught that *forgotten* mortal sins are no hindrance to grace, though they never be confessed particularly, for it is not the sin, but the affection to sin, that is the obstacle to grace; and that a perfect act of contrition (with desire of the Sacrament) *at once* obtains forgiveness of even mortal sin. There is, therefore, the recognition of the possibility of the remission of mortal sin without the actual reception of the Sacrament of Penance.

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[1] *Gravis materia, i.e.* mortal sin.

[2] Almost any Roman Catholic book that treats of confession speaks of this danger. In the Life of St. Vincent de Paul we read that, when he founded his Institute, one of its chief works was to send priests about the country on missions, with the hope of enabling the multitudes who had made sacrilegious confessions to confess truthfully.

Our Lord has given the power to His Church of absolving and retaining sin, but He seems to have left the terms of absolution to be settled by the hierarchy. It is, however, plain from God's Word that confession of sin, and not merely of sinfulness, is a necessary condition of forgiveness—the second step to repentance: ".The Scripture moveth us in sundry places to acknowledge and confess our manifold sins and wickedness; . . . to the end that we may obtain forgiveness of the same." Confession of sin is made both in public and in private. In public, according to the present discipline of the Church, the confession is in general terms. In private confession each remembered sin should be named; such confession is made in two ways—to God alone, or to God in the hearing of a priest.

Contrition is the essential condition of pardon, without which all is vain: "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, shalt Thou not despise."

Absolution will, necessarily, be either general or particular. The general absolution follows a general confession of sinfulness made by the congregation, while the application of the absolving power of the Church to an individual penitent will necessarily follow a confession of personal sin.

It is in the latter form that the acts of the penitent—*i.e.* Contrition, Confession, and Satisfaction—together with the absolution of the priest, go to make up "the Sacrament of Penance." This individual application of the Precious Blood, when voluntarily sought in faith, is the fullest assurance of pardon that can be given to the soul.

It can therefore hardly be lightly neglected by any who are earnestly desirous of leaving no means of grace unused. "All who would be saved," writes Dr. Mason, "must be absolved; and all who would be absolved, must confess to the best of their ability. But Holy Scripture, although it recommends confession to man as well as to God,[1] lays down no positive and universal command to make a definite confession to a priest as a condition of absolution. The experience of ages has led the Church[2] to provide that method in case of need; but without clearer instructions from ancient times she has no right to prescribe it for all. . . . Upon the doctrinal question, indeed, the English Church leaves no doubt whatever; but the practical question is left to be decided for each soul separately."[3]

It may be well to notice that confession in the strict sense of the word does not involve "direction." Sacramental confession is made chiefly with a view to "the benefit of absolution." If the penitent ask for special counsel and advice it may be given him; but even so the penitent is under no obligation to act upon the advice. It may be good counsel or it may be ill-judged. The absolution, following sincere confession, is the "benefit" sought in Penance. The aim of the priest is to lead the soul more and more to trust itself to conscience and the guidance of the Holy Ghost. It is often the mixing up of direction with the Sacrament of Penance that brings the latter into discredit.

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[1] St. James v. 16. We may confess to anyone, but to His ministers alone has God given "power and commandment to declare to His people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins."

[2] In this land.

[3] *The Faith of the Gospel.*

Dr. Pusey concludes his study of the Fathers on the subject of Confession with these weighty words: "Although, however, it is certain from the above evidence that the early Church had no obligatory confession, except that of overt acts of sin, with a view to public penitence, and consequently that confession, as now practised in the Roman Communion, is not essential to the validity of the general exercise of the power of the keys, still, as a matter of discipline, it belongs to the Christian prudence of any Church to imitate it, or lay it aside.[1] It does not follow that, because it was not practised in the early Church, it may not be a salutary check in the degraded state in which the Church now is: if a Church have it, it should not be looked upon as a burden, but as a privilege, as must any check upon our self-willed, forgetful ways be; if a Church have laid it aside, there is no ground for misgiving, as though it had parted with anything essential to the obtaining forgiveness, so that individuals do not omit 'the works of repentance,' self-chastisement, almsgiving, prayer."

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[1] *i.e.* as *obligatory.*

"O Soul of Jesus, sick to death!
Thy Blood and prayer together plead;
My sins have bowed Thee to the ground,
As the storm bows the feeble reed.

* * * *

"My God! my God! and can it be
That I should sin so lightly now,
And think no more of evil thoughts,
Than of the wind that waves the bough?

"I walk the earth with lightsome step,
Smile at the sunshine, breathe the air,
Do my own will, nor ever heed
Gethsemane and Thy long prayer.

"Shall it be always thus, O Lord?
Wilt Thou not work this hour in me
The grace Thy Passion merited,
Hatred of self and love of Thee?

"Oh, by the pains of Thy pure love,
Grant me the gift of holy fear;
And give me of Thy Bloody Sweat
To wash my guilty conscience clear!

"Ever when tempted, make me see,
Beneath the olive's moon-pierced shade,
My God, alone, outstretched, and bruised,
And bleeding, on the earth He made.

"And make me feel it was my sin,
As though no other sin there were,
That was to Him Who bears the world
A load that He could scarcely bear."[1]

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[1] F. FABER.

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) Joshua vii. 16–21. The expression, "Give glory to God," is frequently equivalent to "Confess your sin." (Cf. 1 Sam. vi. 5; Jer. xiii. 16; St. John ix. 24.)

(2) 2 Sam. xxiv. 10–15. Forgiveness does not mean that the penalty of wrong-doing is removed. David had already learnt this. (See 2 Sam. xii. 13, 14.)

(3) Ezra ix. 5–9. Ezra acknowledges that the sins of the people have brought down the judgments of God in punishment.

(4) Job vii. 20, 21. "I have sinned" is the confession not of the lips only, but of the heart, even of Job who was "perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil." (Ch. i. 1.)

(5) St. Matt. xxvii. 3–11. Judas made a bad confession. Remorse is not godly sorrow. He had no trust in the love and pity of our Lord, no hope. Confession without faith, hope, and love, is useless.

(6) St. John xxi. 15–18. Compare with St. Matt. xxvi. 69–75. St. Peter sinned, but "wept bitterly" for sorrow; hence his restoration. Our Lord is ever willing to restore to His favour those who repent. He "willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live."

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

XXII.

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Unction of the Sick

Type

"Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth." (1 Kings xvii. 14.)

Jesus Christ

"And He called unto Him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits. . . . And they went out, and preached that men should repent. And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them." (St. Mark vi. 7, 12, 13.)

The Soul

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff comfort me. Thou shalt prepare a table before me against them that trouble me; Thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my cup shall be full." (Ps. xxiii. 4, 5.)

XXII.

Unction of the Sick

IN the Old Testament we read that the prophet Elijah was sent to Zarephath to lodge with a widow and her son. Elijah found her at the point of death through famine; he, however, blessed the little oil she still had in a cruse, and the handful of meal in a barrel, so that they sustained the household through the three years of want. By the prophet's benediction the oil became the protection of the widow and her son from death.

In the Collect for this Sunday it is said that God is pleased to show His "almighty power most chiefly in showing mercy and pity." This "mercy and pity" God often wills should be applied through channels of grace ordained by Himself. The visit of the prophet to the widow may typify the whole ministry of the Church used by our Lord as His instrument in succouring His people. This was also typified in the Gospel when the multitudes were fed by our Lord in the wilderness through the ministry of the Apostles.

The Evangelist tells us that our Lord "brake, and gave the loaves to His disciples, and the disciples to the multitude."[1] The sacramental system is the fulfilment of what was here foreshadowed. Our Lord provided special means of grace to help the soul in each great crisis of its earthly life. By Baptism it was to receive new birth; by Confirmation strength for the spiritual warfare; by the Bread of Life it was nourished with Divine food; in Penance an assured pardon was placed within its reach. It is also believed that our Lord entrusted a special means of grace to His Church to meet the needs of the sick.

St. James writes, in his Epistle, "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the Church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the Name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."[2] St. James here connects the restoration of the sick to bodily health and the remission of sins, with the outward ceremony of anointing with oil.

In the Sacrament of Confirmation there was clearly a distinction between the temporary miraculous gifts that accompanied the apostolic laying on of hands, and the permanent gifts that were to be transmitted by the successors of the Apostles. It would, however, not be accurate to suppose that restoration to bodily health through Unction entirely ceased after the death of the Apostles. It is very well known that even down to the present day the most extraordinary recovery from sickness from time to time accompanies the anointing of the sick. This recovery, however, must from the first have been separable from the remission of sin. The very aged, for instance, would obey the command to send for the "elders of the Church," but we have no reason to suppose that their age was miraculously prolonged beyond the limits of human life; while on the other hand we may not suppose that they received no grace from the Unction and its accompanying prayer.

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[1] St. Matt. xiv. 19.
[2] St. James v. 14, 15.

To the young it might well be that from the brink of the grave they should be called back to live for Christ in the world. To the aged the great need would be that the "remains" of the sins of many years should be as far as possible blotted out, so that they might with a good hope enter into eternity.

It has always been thought that the soul has peculiar trials as it draws near the moment of separation from the body. The promise, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee,"[1] pointed to some special need of the soul for the sustaining consciousness of the Divine Presence in that hour of trial, and it was the assurance of God's nearness that led the psalmist to exclaim, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me." We know that sin alienates the soul from God and the consciousness of His Presence, so that anything which removes sin does at the same time restore to the soul the fellowship with God to which the Christian is called through Jesus Christ.

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[1] Isa. xliii. 2.

We are not therefore to suppose, from the word of St. James, that restoration to health and the pardon of sin would, in any given case, infallibly follow the reception of the Sacrament of Unction. That must depend on the will of God and the penitence of the sick person. What we are taught is that Unction is a sacramental means for these ends.

And here we may notice how peculiarly fitting is the anointing with oil to shadow forth the inward grace of this Sacrament. As the water in Holy Baptism, and the bread and wine in the Holy Eucharist, exhibit the special virtue of the Sacrament, as well as supply the means by which this virtue is applied to the soul, so does oil in the rite of Unction. Oil is the first and commonest remedy for a wound in the flesh, and signifies the healing of the soul wounded by sin. In the East the use of oil was familiar not only on account of its curative powers, but because it was also in daily use as a means for rendering the body vigorous and agile. Hence the athletes of ancient Greece and Rome invariably prepared for their exercises by anointing their limbs with fragrant oil. "Herein we see how beautifully our Blessed Lord arranged and ordered the sacramental system of His Church, and in how striking a way He made nature to illustrate grace, not only to signify it, but also to become the means of communicating it. Those who have lived in the East know how important a part of the physician's remedy for external wounds is oil. . . . Thus in the parable of the good Samaritan, the wounded and fainting traveller is strengthened by a draught of wine, and his wounds dressed with oil. So when our Lord sent out His disciples to preach, He gave them power to work miracles by means of outward signs: 'They anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.'"[1]

It is, however, not merely necessary to prove that a sacred rite is mentioned in Holy Scripture as an Apostolic practice, but that the Church as a whole has understood that such a rite was meant to be permanently in use. There are rites named in Holy Scripture—such as the Agape and baptism for the dead—that have not been continued in the Church. On the other hand, Confirmation, Penance, and Unction, are among the rites that have been retained to the present day. We have evidence from the testimony of the Fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries to show that Unction of the Sick was continued as one of the sacred rites of the Church of Christ. It is, however, true that little, if any, witness to this rite can be found in the preceding centuries. The post-Apostolic Fathers do not mention it, and we do not read that the dying were wont to receive it during that period. This silence might embarrass persons who were strangers to the state of things in the Church during those centuries. The

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[1] *Tracts for the Day.*

disciplina arcani or reserve, in speaking of any of the Christian mysteries, was a characteristic of the early Church, surrounded as its disciples were by hostile Jews and Pagans devoted to malignant and incurable superstitions.

On various grounds it is certain that portions of the Church system were held back in primitive times. Those Sacraments that were merely for the well-being (*bene esse*) of the Christian life, and not essential to its bestowal or existence, were, as far as possible, concealed from a scoffing world. No one would ever now pretend that the lesser Sacraments are necessary to salvation to individuals. Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist were all received by those who entered the Church of Christ, and were consequently expounded to all. The two former of these Sacraments were joined together, and administered of necessity to those who sought to belong to the Christian body, while the Eucharist was daily celebrated, and must necessarily be within the knowledge of all Christians. Unction of the Sick would be perhaps only once required in a lifetime, and might well be passed over in comparative silence. Moreover, the circumstances under which Unction would necessarily be administered in the post-Apostolic age must have very seriously limited its universal reception. Few households were entirely Christian. There would have been great difficulty in securing privacy in the sick room of a family composed chiefly of Pagans, and the lives of the ministers were too valuable to be, without real necessity, exposed to betrayal and martyrdom. We must remember that during the centuries of persecution the profession of Christianity was illegal, and the greatest prudence was necessarily observed in order that the Church might not be needlessly weakened by the loss of her children through imprisonment and death.

The Eucharist, as a Sacrament of vital importance, was, we know, allowed to be carried to the sick by laymen, and even by women. But Unction could not be administered by laymen, was not necessary to salvation, and therefore might well have been but seldom used. When these facts are considered, and also the loss of many ancient documents, it is not surprising that there is little evidence obtainable of the use of this Sacrament until the age of persecution had passed away.

What is of primary significance is that throughout the whole Church—Eastern and Western—this rite was administered to the sick as soon as the Church was free from the need of that secrecy which was essential to her existence during the first centuries in her conflict with established paganism. We may conclude, therefore, that Unction of the Sick was among the rites entrusted by our Lord to His Church; that it was certainly commanded by an Apostle; that it was never wholly discontinued in any age of the Church; that it obtained everywhere from the fifth until the sixteenth century; and that a form of administration is to be found in every part of the Church at this day, save only within the Anglican Communion. A form for Unction of the Sick was provided in the First Prayer Book of Edward the Sixth, but omitted in subsequent editions.

Bishop Forbes, in his celebrated treatise on the Thirty-nine Articles, writes: "The Unction of the sick is the lost pleiad of the Anglican firmament. One must at once confess and deplore that a distinctly Scriptural practice has ceased to be commanded in the Church of England. Excuses may be made of 'corrupt following of the Apostles,' in that it was used, contrary to the mind of St. James, when all hope of the restoration of bodily health was gone; but it cannot be denied that there has been practically lost an Apostolic practice, whereby, in case of grievous sickness, the faithful were anointed and prayed over for the forgiveness of their sins, and to restore them, if God so willed, or to give them spiritual support in their maladies. . . . Since, however, the Visitation of the Sick is a private office, and uniformity is required only in public offices, there is nothing to hinder the revival of the Apostolic and Scriptural custom of anointing the sick whensoever any devout person may desire it. It is, indeed, difficult to say on what principle it could be refused. The rite was restored by the non-juring Bishops. Meanwhile, until it can be generally restored, it may be observed that it was never considered necessary to salvation, as is formally laid down by St. Thomas.[1] It was rather a privilege of the devout."

It may be added that there are bishops of the Anglican Communion who are accustomed to bless the oil for the sick, so that any priest has the opportunity of granting the request of one who desires to obey the Apostolic precept of St. James.[2]

May the Holy Spirit, Whose office throughout the inspired pages of Holy Scripture is symbolised by the pure oil of the olive, stir up the minds of our chief pastors, the bishops, to restore this gift also to us in due season.[2] In the meantime, they who think it needful to wait for authority to restore what it allowed to be taken away may find comfort in the knowledge that when a Sacrament is not within reach, it may reasonably be supposed that the Holy Ghost will not allow the soul to suffer loss. The "blessed unction from above" should, if possible, be the more earnestly sought, when the Sacrament of Unction cannot be had. With this intention the great hymn to the Holy Ghost is peculiarly appropriate and suggestive as the prayer of those who seek His aid in their extremity—

"Thy blessed unction from above
Is comfort, life, and fire of love."

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[1] iv. dist. 23, q. i. art. i. *fin.*

[2] Dr. Mason, in *The Faith of the Gospel*, seems to teach that the "Visitation of the Sick" in our Prayer Book takes the place of Unction. He does not, however, offer any proof for so novel a theory, and suggests that the "imposition of hands can be used without any disloyalty to the existing office of Visitation." The same is *a fortiori* true of the Apostolic and Scriptural ceremony of Unction.

Can we doubt that they who, without any fault of their own, pass to their eternal rest deprived of the sacramental anointing, will none the less find the Holy Spirit ready to succour them and hear the prayer—

> "Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,
> And lighten with celestial fire;
> Thou the anointing Spirit art,
> Who dost Thy sevenfold gifts impart:
> Thy blessed unction from above
> Is comfort, life, and fire of love;
> Enable with perpetual light
> The dulness of our blinded sight:
> Anoint and cheer our soilèd face
> With the abundance of Thy grace;
> Keep far our foes, give peace at home;
> Where Thou art guide, no ill can come.
> Teach us to know the Father, Son,
> And Thee, of Both, to be but One;
> That through the ages all along
> This may be our endless song,
> Praise to Thy eternal merit,
> Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) Deut. xxviii. 58–68. Sickness is here spoken of as a punishment for sin. Usually illness is not to be looked upon as sent on account of personal sin. It comes from natural causes, and God does not miraculously interfere to hinder it. Sickness belongs to the fallen world, and we may well therefore at such a time examine our conscience, and deepen repentance.

(2) Job ii. 1–11. Satan seems occasionally to be allowed to afflict the body as well as to harass the soul. Sickness may therefore be a trial to test the patience and faith of God's people.

(3) 2 Kings xx. 1–8. We do rightly in sickness to pray to God for recovery. We should nevertheless trust God, and offer our will to His will.

(4) Ps. xci. 1–11. God preserves those who trust in Him, but not always from physical suffering. If immunity from trouble were granted to all the righteous, it would be said that they served God only for selfish ends.

(5) Ps. lxxiii. 1–21. The psalmist dwells upon the fact that immunity from misfortune is not to be taken as a sign of Divine favour. This is to be remembered—"Whom the Lord *loveth* He chasteneth."

(6) 1 Cor. xii. 9, 30. God usually heals through the ministry of the physician; but He has "gifts of healing" in the Sacrament of Unction. We do rightly to use all the skill of the physician, but we do wrongly if we neglect to seek God's help and blessing upon the remedies used. (See 2 Chron. xvi. 11, 12.) Asa was not to be blamed because he sought "to the physicians," but because "he sought *not* to the Lord."

XXIII.

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Holy Order

Type

"And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God." (Gen. xiv. 18.)

Jesus Christ

"As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you."
(St. John xx. 21.)

The Soul

"Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." (Ps. cx. 4.)

XXIII.

Holy Order

IN the Epistle for this Sunday[1] St. Paul traces the power and efficiency of the Christian ministry to God as its source: "Our sufficiency is of God, Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament." This ministry exceeds in glory the ministry of the Old Testament, even as the Gospel is more glorious than the Law. "If the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory."

In the natural order, society would be a mere disordered crowd, if there were not certain men appointed to administer the laws and attend to the requirements of the people. If there is to be a society of the redeemed, it also will need to be governed. This ministry of the Church derives its authority from above, not from below; from Jesus Christ, not from the election of the body of the faithful.

Hence we read that our Lord appointed His Apostles to carry on the work of the Church He had founded, entrusted them with the necessary powers for that work, and identified Himself with them, so that it might be said, "He that heareth you heareth Me."[1] The Church on earth was to endure until the coming again of her Lord. Hence the Apostles were to appoint successors, that the ministry might descend from Jesus Christ through them to those upon whom they laid their hands, and thus be handed on from age to age.

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[1] 2 Cor. iii. 4–9.

In the Acts of the Apostles we read that the faithful laity were invited to select men for the office of Deacon. Their nominees did not become deacons by this nomination, but by the laying on of the hands of the Apostles. "Look ye out among you seven men of honest report . . . whom *we* may appoint over this business. . . . And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose" seven men "whom they set before the Apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them."[2]

This laying on of hands for the purpose of ordination imparted the special character and gift by which those ordained were thenceforth distinguished from the laity and endowed with the graces needed for their work. The Apostles not only ordained these persons, but appointed them to their work; giving them not only "orders" but "jurisdiction." Both the gift of Holy Order and the right to exercise it are needful in the Church. Reception both of the Sacrament of Holy Order and jurisdiction has ever since the time of the Apostles been required of those who would lawfully minister in the Church of Christ. We read in the Book of Common Prayer, in the Preface to the Ordinal, that "It is evident unto all men diligently reading the holy Scripture and ancient Authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church; Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. Which Offices were evermore had in such reverend Estimation, that no man might presume to execute any of them, except he were first called, tried, and examined, and known to have such qualities as are requisite for the same; and also by publick Prayer, with Imposition of Hands, were approved and admitted thereunto by lawful Authority. And therefore, to the intent that these Orders may be continued, and reverently used and esteemed, in the Church of England; no man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful Bishop, Priest, or Deacon in the Church of England, or suffered to execute any of the said Functions, except he be called, tried, examined, and admitted thereunto, according to the Form hereafter following, or hath had formerly Episcopal Consecration, or Ordination."

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[1] St. Luke x. 16.

[2] Acts vi. 3–6.

In reference to the need of jurisdiction, we read in Canon 48,[1] "No curate or minister shall be permitted to serve in any place without examination and admission of the Bishop of the Diocese, or Ordinary of the place, having episcopal jurisdiction, in writing under his hand and seal."

We may now briefly notice how, throughout Holy

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[1] Canons of 1603.

Scripture, God has willed to communicate with men through certain chosen ministers. When the families descended from Noah spread themselves over the world, we find that everywhere religion expressed itself in much the same way.

Priesthood, temples, altars, and sacrifices are common to almost all the religions of antiquity. We do not know—owing to the obscurity of times so remote, and the imperfect historical records—the origin of these institutions, but the reverence with which they were always regarded, and the numerous points of resemblance to the Aaronic priesthood of Israel, seem to point to a Divine institution.

Persons who are scandalised at the fact that there are in Christianity so many links with pagan antiquity, forget that this is an incidental proof of the fact that God has throughout the ages been guiding His people, and preparing the way for His Church; that our Lord came "not to destroy, but to fulfil" the previsions of antiquity.

The functions of the priest and prophet may exist in the same person. The only instance in Holy Scripture of a priesthood earlier than the time of Abraham, is found in the mention of Melchizedek, a "priest (cohên) of the most high God."[1] In the worship of the patriarchs themselves, the head of the family—the eldest son—acted as its priest. The office went together with the birthright, and might be transferred with it. The sin of Esau in selling his birthright for a mess of pottage lay in his evident contempt for what was held in high esteem.[1] We are told that Joseph married the daughter of On, a priest of the goddess Neith,[2] and that probably as a consequence of this intimate connection with the Egyptian sacerdotal caste Joseph showed special favour to the land of the priests. "Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt . . . that Pharaoh should have the fifth part; except the land of the priests only, which became not Pharaoh's."[3]

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[1] Gen. xiv. 18.

The education of Moses in the house of Pharaoh,[4] and possibly in the colleges and temples of the priests, may very probably have left a deep impression of the priestly dignity and office upon the mind of the future legislator of God's people. At the time of the Exodus we read of sacrifice, but of no priestly caste, although it is clear that there were priests of some kind from the direction given to Moses before the promulgation of the law: "Let the priests also, which come near to the Lord, sanctify themselves."[5] Then the tribe of Levi were chosen as the instructors of the people, and within the tribe itself there was instituted the priesthood of "the sons of Aaron."[6]

Sometimes the Levites are distinguished as such from the priests, and sometimes the word is used for the whole tribe, the priests included. The functions of the priesthood are clearly defined in the Old Testament. They centred around the offering of the various sacrifices. When our Lord came to redeem, He willed to clothe Himself with the fulness of the priestly office. He, however, was born of the tribe of Judah, not of the priestly tribe of Levi, because He willed to institute a new and better succession than that of the Old Law. His priesthood was to be after the order of Melchizedek, whose mystic offering of bread and wine was a type of that great mystery by which our Lord left to His Church the memorial of the Sacrifice of Calvary by giving to her His own Sacramental Presence under the species of bread and wine. Our Lord chose His Apostles and ordained them to their high office when He said, "Do this in remembrance of Me." He added the power of absolution to that of sacrifice when He said, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."

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[1] Heb. xii. 16.
[2] Gen. xli. 45.
[3] Gen. xlvii. 26.
[4] Acts vii. 22.
[5] Exod. xix. 22.
[6] Exod. xxviii. 1; Num. xviii.

These two powers—of sacrifice and forgiving sin—distinguish the priesthood of the Gospel from the priesthood of the Law. The old Jewish sacrifices foreshadowed the oblation of Christ which was to be offered once upon the Cross, and continually pleaded in the memorial Sacrifice of Himself in the Eucharist.

Just as in the five Sacraments that we have been considering, Jesus Christ is the fountain of supernatural life and grace to the individual soul, so in

Holy Order He is the source of the social life of grace to His mystical Body, the Church. The distinctive powers of the hierarchy are: to teach in Christ's Name, to offer the Eucharistic Sacrifice, to forgive or retain sins, and to be the channel of blessing to the Church. The Bishop possesses the Sacrament of Order in its fulness; the Priest receives from the Bishop a share in some of its powers. The Bishop alone can ordain and confirm,[1] but the priesthood shares with the Episcopate in the other powers, though the priests have not the right to exercise all these powers without receiving jurisdiction from the Bishop.

In the services of the Church a Deacon cannot pronounce the Absolution, offer the Eucharist, or give the Blessing, simply because he lacks the sacerdotal character which the Priest shares with the Bishop.

Hooker writes: "The Ministry of things divine is a Function, which as God did Himself institute, so neither may men undertake the same but by authority and power given them in lawful manner. . . . What Angel in Heaven could have said to man, as our Lord did unto Peter, 'Feed My sheep'? Preach? Baptize? Do this in remembrance of Me? Whose sins ye retain, they are retained; and their offences in Heaven pardoned, whose faults you shall on earth forgive? What think we? Are these terrestrial sounds, or else are they voices uttered out of the clouds above? The

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[1] In the Eastern Church a priest may administer Confirmation with chrism consecrated by a bishop.

Power of the Ministry of God translateth out of darkness into glory; it raiseth men from the earth and bringeth God Himself down from Heaven; by blessing visible elements, it maketh them invisible grace; it giveth daily the Holy Ghost; it hath to dispose of that flesh which was given for the life of the world, and that blood which was poured out to redeem souls; when it poureth maledictions upon the heads of the wicked, they perish; when it revoketh the same they revive. O wretched blindness, if we admire not so great Power; more wretched, if we consider it aright, and notwithstanding imagine that any but God can bestow it! To whom Christ hath imparted Power, both over that mystical body which is the society of souls, and that natural which is Himself, for the knitting of both in one (a work which antiquity doth call the making of Christ's body), the same power is in such not amiss both termed a kind of mark or character, and acknowledged to be indelible. Ministerial Power is a mark of separation, because it severeth them that have it from other men, and maketh them a special Order consecrated unto the service of the Most High in things wherewith others may not meddle."

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) Num. xviii. 1–8. The clergy have "the charge of the sanctuary," but they have it for the sake of the people.

(2) Lev. vi. 1–8. (Sacrifice.) The trespass offering for sins done wittingly obtained the pardon of the sinner. Our Lord, as the High Priest, has atoned for all sins. This atonement is pleaded in the Eucharist, and applied to individual souls.

(3) Lev. v. 1–13. (Absolution.) The forgiveness of sin was prefigured as coming through channels ordained by God. In the Old Law forgiveness accompanied these ceremonies, but was not conveyed through them.

(4) Num. vi. 23–27. (Benediction.) This blessing is still used in the Christian Church, and with a deeper significance than of old. We have here the threefold use of the word "Lord," in reference probably to the Three Divine Persons of the One Divine Nature.

(5) Heb. xiii. 9–16. Here we are warned against false doctrine, and reminded that "we have an altar" as well as the Jews, and one that is far more holy; since upon it are no longer offered sacrifices that were but types and shadows, but the reality they anticipated. With this Sacrifice we join the chief praises of our lips by making the Eucharist the centre of all worship.

(6) Heb. x. 1–15. The "Body of Jesus Christ" (*v.* 10) was once offered in pain on the Cross; and that one offering ever maketh intercession for us in heaven and on earth.

XXIV.

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Holy Matrimony

Prophecy

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." (Gen. ii. 24.)

Jesus Christ

"From the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." (St. Mark x. 6–9.)

The Soul

"As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." (Isa. lxii. 5.)

XXIV.

Holy Matrimony

THE Epistle for this Sunday[1] speaks of the hidden meaning of the promise made to Abraham. St. Paul writes to the Galatians: "To Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one; And to thy seed, which is Christ."

By the "seed of Abraham" was meant, no doubt, at the first, the people of Israel; but "in accordance with the analogy of Old Testament types and symbols, the term involves two secondary meanings. *First* . . . that 'the Christ' was the true seed of Abraham. In Him the race was summed up, as it were. In Him it fulfilled its purpose and became a blessing to the whole earth. Without Him its separate existence as a peculiar people had no meaning. Thus He was not only the representative, but the embodiment of the race. In this way the people of Israel is the type of Christ; and in the New Testament parallels are sought in the career of the one to the life of the other. In this sense St. Paul used 'the seed of Abraham' here. But *secondly;*

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[1] Gal. iii. 16–22.

according to the analogy of interpretation of the Old Testament in the New, the spiritual takes the place of the natural; the Israel after the flesh becomes Israel after the spirit; the Jewish nation denotes the Christian Church. . . . These two interpretations are not opposed to each other; they are not independent of each other. Without Christ the Christian people have no existence. He is the source of their spiritual life. They are one in Him. By this link St. Paul at the close of the chapter (*vv.* 28, 29) connects together the two senses of the 'seed of Abraham,' dwelling once more on the unity of the seed: 'Ye are all *one man* in Christ; and if ye *are part of Christ*, then ye are *Abraham's seed*, and heirs according to promise.'"[1]

In the Epistle to the Hebrews our attention is directed to the way in which God fulfilled His promise to Abraham when its fulfilment seemed, humanly speaking, hopeless. "Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged Him faithful Who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable."[2]

Then, when the fulness of time had come, He "sent forth (from Himself[3]) His Son, made of a woman."[4]

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[1] *Epistle to the Galatians*, Dr. LIGHTFOOT.

[2] Heb. xi. 11, 12.

[3] ἐξαπέστειλεν, a word that assumes the pre-existence of the Son.

[4] Gal. iv. 4.

Our Lord was conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of a pure Virgin; but nevertheless He willed so to honour the estate of matrimony as to be born of a Virgin "espoused to a man."[1] There was no necessity for this beyond the will of God, for it would have been no whit more miraculous if God had dispensed with all human agency in giving His Son to the world, than to give Him to us in the way He did—having no earthly father.

We must distinguish between marriage in itself, or according to the natural law, and the Sacrament of marriage.

Marriage, as a natural contract between man and woman, has been raised by Christ into a means of grace.

Any form of marriage which includes the consent of the two contracting parties is no doubt a marriage, but it is not the Sacrament of Matrimony. To make marriage a Sacrament, it must be a contract entered into by those who are baptised. It is now usually believed that every marriage between baptised persons is necessarily the Sacrament of Matrimony, whether or no the marriage be entered upon before a priest. The relationship of the baptised with Christ is that which makes their marriage contract sacramental. "The parties themselves are the ministers of the Sacrament; the matter consists in the words or other signs by which each gives himself or herself over to the other; the form, which gives a determinate character to the matter, consists in the acceptation of this surrender by each of the contracting parties. Hence, wherever Christians bind themselves by outward signs to live as man and wife, they receive the Sacrament of marriage. No priest or religious ceremony of any kind is needed."[1]

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[1] St. Luke i. 27.

Marriage is, and always has been everywhere, sacred, but not always has it been, or is, a Sacrament.

The institution of marriage is founded upon the requirements of human nature, and dates from the creation of man. It owes, therefore, its origin to God Himself, since He alone is the author of man's nature. In its more formal aspect, however, marriage has always been a natural and civil institution, and usually associated with some religious rites. The story of the origin of woman as "taken out of man" is evidently the basis for their being by matrimony said to become "one flesh." The primeval command, "*Therefore* shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh,"[2] follows immediately upon the statement that originally both sexes were potentially in Adam. From this it would seem to follow that the man and his wife are essentially one, and that the union is indissoluble. We notice, also, that the words "they twain" teach that monogamy is the original and Divine idea in marriage. We find, also, an essential equality of the wife with her husband —an equality that in no way hinders a certain subordination of the woman to the man. These principles involve certain respective duties of man and wife. It was not until after the first sin that we read of a certain penal subordination[1] of the woman to the man being added to that which was involved in their relationship from the first.

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[1] *A Catholic Dictionary.* The opinion that the sacerdotal benediction is necessary in order that a marriage should be a Sacrament is not now usually taught in the Western Church.

[2] Gen. ii. 24.

We find in the post-diluvial age a restoration of monogamy, and then again the recognition of polygamy. The principle, however, of monogamy was maintained by the recognition of one woman as in a special sense the wife. Divorce, also, was not uncommon in the patriarchal age. After the Captivity monogamy again seems to have become the more recognised standard in marriage, so that we have no example of polygamy in the Bible during this period. There is no doubt, however, that polygamy still existed, for Herod the Great had no less than nine wives; but the fact that the Holy Scriptures bring before us no post-exilic example of polygamy is in itself a silent condemnation of this corruption of the original idea of marriage. Our Lord plainly reasserted the Divine origin of marriage and monogamy when He answered the question put to Him by the Pharisees: "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?"

In St. Matthew's Gospel we learn that Jesus "answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that He which made them in the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto Him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery."[1]

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[1] "He shall rule over thee." (Gen. iii. 16.)

These words of our Lord have been variously interpreted, but the Church has always refused to allow divorce *a vinculo*—from the essential marriage tie. Husband and wife may separate for a lawful cause, but they must remain man and wife till death parts them. The infamous Divorce Laws of the present day are going far towards the destruction of the family life upon which the whole fabric of the national life depends. To allow divorce on account of adultery merely tends to foster that sin, as its commission becomes a way of escape for those who, for other reasons, desire to separate and enter into new unions. Dr. Mason well says: "Christian man and wife can never be anything else to each other, and all the legal divorces in the world can only make a profane pretence of putting asunder those whom God has joined together. Christian marriage is more than a binding contract between two parties still in reality separate. 'They are no more twain, but one flesh.' There is, of course, no fusion of personality; but there is a vital union of personalities for which St. Paul can find no parallel but that between Christ and His Church. When marriage has its due course, this union goes far beyond what is earthly and physical. The natural element in it is made to serve as the basis and vehicle of Divine grace. By coming within the sphere of the Holy Ghost's operations, marriage conveys the grace of unselfish devotion, of perfected and purified outpouring of heart to heart, of living in and for each other."[1]

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[1] St. Matt. xix. 3–9.

There are throughout the Bible frequent references to the symbolic meaning of marriage. It is shown to signify the spiritual union between God and His people, between Christ and His Church. Consequently, idolatry is often spoken of as "whoredom."

It is, perhaps, significant that our Lord's first miracle is wrought at a wedding feast. Christ came to "fulfil" the law, and hence He wills to sanctify the very springs of natural life, by adding to nature, grace; and by nature and grace raising up the spiritual family of His Church. St. Paul teaches that God has consecrated the state of matrimony to such an excellent mystery that in it is signified and represented the spiritual marriage and unity betwixt Christ and His Church.[1] By this new grace that has been bestowed upon the union of Christian marriage the natural contract has been elevated into a sacramental mystery. No argument as to divorce can therefore be borrowed from what was, for the hardness of their hearts, permitted by Moses to the children of Israel. The union betwixt Christ and His Church is indissoluble; and hence it is that they who are joined together by God to signify this union cannot be sundered by any law of man or any sin of man.

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[1] *Faith of the Gospel.*

The teaching of the New Testament concerning the mutual duties of husband and wife is beautifully expressed by St. Paul in the Epistle to the Ephesians: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church: and He is the Saviour of the body. Therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it: that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church: for we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and His Church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."

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[1] Eph. v. 22–32.

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) Isa. liv. 1–11. The Jewish Church was a type of the Christian Church, "the Bride" of Christ.

(2) Jer. iii. 12–20. The soul also was prefigured by Israel. Hence the call to repentance and return to union with God (*vv.* 13, 14) applies to each of the true Israelites.

(3) Hosea ii. 14–23. God's promises of reconciliation carry with them a full restoration to privileges forfeited by unfaithfulness.

(4) Eph. v. 22, 23. The mutual practical duties of man and wife are sanctified by the great mystery of the union betwixt Christ and the Church. Dogma and duty are usually allied.

(5) 1 Peter iii. 1–10. Unity and love are fostered by mutual forbearance. The neglect of the command, "Be courteous," is often the prelude to serious trouble.

(6) Rev. xxi. 9–27. The union between Christ and His Church is eternal; and in Him all the hallowed affections of time are perfected in eternity.

XXV.

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Epistles of St. Paul (1)

Chronology of St. Paul's Epistles

GROUP I.

ESCHATOLOGICAL

1 Thessalonians.	Late in A.D. 52.	Written at Corinth.
2 ”	” 53.	” ”

XXV.

The Epistles of St. Paul

THE Epistles of St. Paul occupy about one-fourth of the New Testament. St. John Chrysostom writes: "As I keep hearing the Epistles of the Blessed Paul read, and that twice every week, and often three or four times, whenever we are celebrating the memorials of the holy martyrs, gladly do I enjoy the spiritual trumpet, and get roused and warmed with desire at recognising the voice so dear to me, and seem to fancy him all but present to my sight, and behold him conversing with me. But I grieve and am pained that all people do not know this man, as much as they ought to know him. . . . And this comes not from incapacity, but from their not having the wish to be continually conversing with this blessed man. . . . From ignorance of the Scriptures, our countless evils have arisen, the plague of heresies has broken out, men's lives are negligent, and their labours without advantage. For as men deprived of the daylight would not walk aright, so they that look not to the radiance of the Holy Scriptures must needs be frequently and constantly sinning, in that they are walking in the worst darkness.

Now that this happen not to us, let us keep our eyes open to the luminous words of this Apostle; for this man's eloquence shone forth above the sun, and he excelled all the rest in the word of doctrine; for since he laboured more abundantly than they, he also drew upon himself a large measure of the Spirit's grace. . . . For such was that holy soul that it embraced the whole world and carried about all men itself, thinking the nearest relationship to be that in God. And he loved men so, as if he had begotten them all, or rather showed a greater instinctive affection than any father; for such is the grace of the spirit, it exceedeth the pangs of the flesh and displays a more ardent longing. We may see this especially in the soul of Paul, who, having as it were become winged through love, went continually round all, abiding nowhere, nor standing still."[1]

Since, like St. John Chrysostom, we too are seldom a week without hearing passages read at the altar, or in the choir office, from the Epistles of the great Apostle St. Paul, we may well ask ourselves whether we duly value these inspired letters, and find in them the instruction and help that they contain.

We shall find our devotional use of these Epistles helped rather than hindered by a knowledge of the circumstances under which they were first written. They should be read in their chronological order, and not in the order given in our Bibles. We can best follow the drift of any writer by the study of his works in the order in which he wrote them. The Epistle to the Romans was not written until six years after the Epistles to the Thessalonians, while the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians are at least ten years later than those to the Thessalonians. We have no knowledge that St. Paul wrote any Epistle until about sixteen years after his conversion. It would seem probable that he was converted to the faith when about thirty years of age. His first Epistle (to the Thessalonians) was not written until he was about forty-six years old.

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[1] *Rom. Argum.*

His Epistles may be divided into four distinct groups, namely, those written during his second missionary journey;[1] those written during his third missionary journey;[2] those written during his first imprisonment at Rome;[3] and those that followed his liberation from prison and immediately preceded his martyrdom.[4]

After his conversion St. Paul preached in Damascus and Arabia for three years.[5] He then went up to Jerusalem, re-entering for the first time the city he had left as a zealous persecutor of the Christian Church. His sojourn there was but short, and he returned to Tarsus, his native city. It was here that Barnabas found him and claimed his help for the Christian flock at Antioch. From Antioch St. Paul set out with Barnabas upon his first missionary journey.

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[1] The two to the Thessalonians, A.D. 52.

[2] To the Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans, A.D. 57–58.

[3] To the Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians, and to Philemon, A.D. 62–63.

[4] To Titus and Timothy, A.D. 65–68.

[5] Gal. i. 17, 18.

Their travels in Cyprus and in the southern provinces of Asia Minor occupied some years. On their return the two missionaries went up to take part in the first council of the Church at Jerusalem (A.D. 50), when St. Paul defended the liberty of the Gentile converts against those who were desirous of subjecting them to the law of Moses. This done, St. Paul again left Antioch and began his second missionary journey (A.D. 51). Accompanied by Silas, a prophet of the Church at Jerusalem, "he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the Churches"[1] he had founded during his first journey. On coming to Lystra, St. Paul found Timothy, "the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek."[2] With Silas and Timothy St. Paul passed through Phrygia and Galatia, and came to Troas, at the western extremity of Asia Minor. Here they were joined by Luke the physician, and in answer to a Divine call[3] the four missionaries crossed the channel that divides Asia from Europe, and came to Philippi, where they founded the first European Christian Church.

St. Paul stayed a short while at Philippi, and then with Silas and Timothy went to Thessalonica, a rich commercial Greek city, in which were many Jews, and a number of Gentiles who had embraced the Jewish faith.[1] St. Paul's success in preaching the gospel to the Thessalonians was rapid and remarkable. He himself says that the gospel came to them not in "word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance."[2] In about three weeks many of the synagogue of the Jews were converted and "consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few."[3] These conversions brought fresh persecution upon the Apostle from "the Jews which believed not,"[4] so that St. Paul had to fly to Berea. Here also he made converts of "honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few."[5]

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[1] Acts xv. 41. [2] Acts xvi. 1. [3] Acts xvi. 12.

The enmity of the Jews pursued him, and the brethren then "sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea: but Silas and Timotheus abode there still. And they conducted Paul and brought him to Athens; and receiving a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed, they departed."[6]

During the years that lay between his conversion and the visit to Thessalonica, St. Paul's life had been one long martyrdom. He had barely escaped with his life from the threatened attack at Damascus; he had been driven from Jerusalem, and from Antioch in Pisidia; at Iconium he had suffered; and at Lystra he had been stoned and left for dead. His troubles had arisen not only from open enemies, but from false brethren. In addition to all this he had been laid low by sickness, and worn with toilsome journeys. At Philippi he was scourged, imprisoned, and shamefully entreated.

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[1] Acts xvii. 1.
[2] 1 Thess. i. 5.
[3] Acts xvii. 4.
[4] Acts xvii. 5.
[5] Acts xvii. 12.
[6] Acts xvii. 14, 15.

In Thessalonica itself the mob had "set the city in an uproar" and sought his life. All these trials had necessarily turned the thoughts of the great Apostle to the time when his Lord would return and the strife should end; so that when leaving Thessalonica he passed through Athens and came to Corinth,[1] his mind was full of the hope that the second Advent might be near at hand. When St. Paul departed from Berea he left Silas and Timothy behind him. They were directed to follow him as soon as possible. Very anxiously did St. Paul await the coming of these two disciples, and it was with joy that he welcomed them, and learned that the Thessalonians were remaining stedfast in the faith. This joy he expresses in his first Epistle to the new converts. "Now when Timotheus," he writes, "came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, . . . we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith: for now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord."[2]

(1) The Gospels were unwritten when St. Paul dictated this Epistle to the Thessalonians; this letter

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[1] The "subscriptions" to the Epistles, *i.e.* the references to the place whence the Epistles were written, are of no authority, and misleading.

[2] 1 Thess. iii. 6-8.

is therefore the first extant Christian document. The Apostle, with characteristic tact and delicacy, associates with himself his two fellow-workers, and begins the Epistle thus: "Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the Church of the Thessalonians." He proceeds to praise their "faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ," and quickly strikes the keynote of the Epistle by reminding his converts that they turned from idols to serve the living and true God, in order to "wait for His Son from heaven."

In this first part of the Epistle the Apostle speaks of his joy at the progress of the gospel in Thessalonica, and encourages the persecuted Christians by reference to his own example. He warns them against the besetting sin of the Gentile world—fornication—and persuades them to brotherly love. He then unfolds the Christian hope of a glorious hereafter for those who "sleep in Jesus." He concludes with many practical commands as to prayer, obedience to their teachers, and watchfulness. There can be no doubt that the Apostles and the whole Primitive Church expected the second Advent to happen very soon. Our Lord's words had doubtless led them to expect that He would return before some of those who heard Him had passed away from this world. Our Lord had, however, expressly stated that the date of His return was one of the mysteries that could not be revealed. The very uncertainty was meant to make men "watch," and live as those who were at any moment likely to be called to meet their Lord. It may have been that this spiritual expectancy was taken too literally by his converts, for we gather that some of them made the anticipation of the speedy coming of Christ an excuse for neglecting their daily duties and living in idleness.

(2) St. Paul, upon hearing this, wrote a second Epistle to the Thessalonians, explaining that so speedy a return of their Lord was not to be expected. He writes: "Now we beseech you, brethren, . . . that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first."

Hence they are to "withdraw . . . from every brother that walketh disorderly," and remember his words, "that if any man would not work, neither should he eat." He states that he has heard that "there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies." Such are to be exhorted, that "with quietness they work, and eat their own bread." In fact St. Paul impresses upon his converts the truth that the strict performance of daily duty is the best preparation for the coming of Christ.

This first group of Epistles is, then, an exhortation to those in trouble to look to Christ as the Consoler, and wait in patient well-doing for His appearing.[1]

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[1] In the Latin *Missa pro defunctis* the Epistle on the day of burial is taken from 1 Thess. iv. 13–18.

Its message is summed up in the Apostle's prayer: "Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work."

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) 1 Thess. i. 10; ii. 19; iii. 13. St. Paul's words were misunderstood by his converts. They understood them to mean that the second Advent would be in their lifetime.

(2) 1 Thess. iv. 13–18. The expression "sleep in Jesus" refers probably to the appearance of the body after death. The soul does not sleep.

(3) 1 Thess. v. 1–4. As far as the individual soul is concerned the hour of death is "the end of the world." Death often comes suddenly. St. Paul's Epistles are full of practical counsel as to how to prepare for the end.

(4) 1 Thess. v. 5–10. The Apostle in this chapter continues his teaching about the second Advent. The suddenness of Christ's appearing is an argument for constant watchfulness.

(5) 2 Thess. i. 6–12. Here again the judgment-day is shown to be a day of wrath for the impenitent.

(6) 2 Thess. ii. 1–5. St. Paul in this second letter corrects the error of those who expected the immediate return of Jesus Christ, and speaks of the Antichrist who must precede the second Advent. It is generally believed that Antichrist will be some supernaturally endowed "man of sin." Some think he will be an evil spirit incarnate who will proclaim himself to be the Christ, and draw away multitudes into perdition. Satan has always striven to obtain the worship due to the Incarnate Son of God. (See vol. i. p. 331.)

XXVI.

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Epistles of St. Paul (2)

Chronology of St. Paul's Epistles

GROUP II.

JUDAIC CONTROVERSY

1 Corinthians. A.D. 57 (spring). Written at Ephesus.
2 ,, ,, (autumn). Written in Macedonia.
Galatians. A.D. 58. Written at Corinth.
Romans ,, ,, ,,

XXVI.

The Epistles of St. Paul (2)

THE second group of Epistles—namely, those to the Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans—is directed against Judaism. St. Paul seeks to show the hostile Jews that their faith was intended to lead them to Christ, and he also refutes the arguments of the Judaising element within the Church by a plain statement of the liberty of Christian converts, and their exemption from the law of Moses. It might seem that these controversies having passed away, the Epistles must also in a great measure have become obsolete. This is very far from being the case, because St. Paul, while combating the particular opposition of his day to the spread of the gospel, has also left us doctrinal instructions, the importance of which cannot be exaggerated. The details of the controversies are obsolete, but the principles upon which St. Paul based his refutation of them are eternal. We have, therefore, in these Epistles a deep mine of dogmatic and moral theology. Leaving Corinth St. Paul went to Ephesus, and then to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles. From Jerusalem he turned his steps to Antioch, and in A.D. 57 again visited Ephesus.

(1) It was at this time that he wrote his First Epistle to the Corinthians. In this letter St. Paul reproves the spirit of faction, and lays down the principles that underlie the relationship of the hierarchy to the multitude of the faithful. He then deals with the moral disorders of the Church, and gives advice on celibacy and marriage. From this he passes on to consider the relationship of Christians to the pagan social life by which they were surrounded; he rebukes a profanation of the Eucharist, deals with spiritual gifts, and draws out the pre-eminence of love. St. Paul concludes his First Epistle to the Corinthians with a magnificent chapter on the doctrine of the resurrection of the body.

(2) The Second Epistle to the Corinthians was probably written at Philippi. Soon after the first Epistle had been written the great riot at Ephesus[1] made it unsafe for the Apostle to remain there. He proceeded to Troas, and in the greatest anxiety awaited the return of Titus from Corinth. Days passed, and the Apostle was filled with gloomy forebodings as to the effect of his first letter. This unbearable suspense led the Apostle to hurry into Macedonia, and there, probably at Philippi, he heard from Titus news which was in the main favourable. His first Epistle had been well received, and the disorders he had condemned were corrected. He learned, however, that fresh trouble had arisen by the arrival of certain men who attacked his apostolic authority, misrepresented

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[1] Acts xix.

his motives, and did their utmost to withdraw the Corinthians from the obedience due to their father in God.

St. Paul therefore sent them a second Epistle answering these calumnies, and offering to the Corinthians what has been well called an *Apologia pro vita sua*—a defence of his actions. The Epistle may be divided into five portions. In the first,[1] St. Paul explains his delay in visiting them; in the second,[2] he insists upon the dignity of his apostolic vocation, its origin, difficulties, and motives; in the third,[3] he repeats his former warning as to the danger of too free intercourse with pagan society, and pardons the incestuous man; while in the fourth,[4] he appeals to their generosity for the poor at Jerusalem, and in the fifth,[5] relates the story of his life.

(3) We come now to the Epistle to the Galatians. St. Paul had founded the Church in Galatia in A.D. 52.[6] When in A.D. 55 he paid them a second visit, he seems to have been received with coldness, and to have seen much that caused him anxiety. The Epistle was written A.D. 58, either at Corinth, or, according to Bishop Lightfoot, from Macedonia. The Epistle to the Galatians is occupied with the same thought as that to the Romans which it preceded.

It is an impassioned setting forth of that which is treated more calmly and thoroughly in the Epistle to the Romans—the relation of the Gentile to the Jew.

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[1] Chapters i., ii.
[2] iii.–vi. 10.
[3] vi. 10 to vii. 16.
[4] viii., ix.
[5] x. to end.
[6] Acts xvi. 6; Gal. iv. 13–16.

It would seem that shortly after St. Paul's second visit to the Galatians, certain Judaisers appeared, and insisted upon the necessity of circumcision and the observance of the Jewish law. They also tried to lower the estimation in which St. Paul was held, and represented him as of little importance compared with other Apostles. The Galatians apparently were easily "bewitched," and had readily accepted the novelties proposed by the Jewish emissaries. To stop this falling away into a paganised Judaism, to show the superiority of the Christian faith, and the way in which to remain stedfast therein, is St. Paul's aim in this letter. Hence we find the Epistle divides into three sections. In the first (chapters i.–ii. 21) St. Paul rebukes the Galatians for their fickleness. He writes: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth?" and then proceeds to vindicate his own independence of the twelve Apostles, and of St. Peter—the Apostle of circumcision—in particular.

The second section (iii.–iv. 31) shows that the law was not final, but preparatory to the Gospel, and has in Jesus Christ its fulfilment. In the third portion of the Epistle (v., vi.) St. Paul dwells upon the nature of Christian freedom, warns the Galatians against abusing this liberty, contrasts the works of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit, and concludes with a glorification of the Cross of Christ.

(4) It was during this stay at Corinth, while his mind was still running upon the lines of argument used in

his Epistle to the Galatians, that St. Paul addressed his Epistle to the Romans.

The origin of the Church in Rome is veiled in obscurity. St. Paul had made it a point of honour to preach in districts where he was utterly unknown, not where the gospel had already been proclaimed.[1] Jews had been introduced into Rome in great numbers by Pompeius the Great (B.C. 63). The first seeds of the Christian faith may have been planted by the Jews and proselytes from Rome who heard St. Peter preach on the Day of Pentecost. This would account for the Christians at Rome looking upon St. Peter as the founder of their Church, but there is no historic evidence that St. Peter visited Rome until shortly before his martyrdom, which took place, there can be no reasonable doubt, in that city.

It may well be that there were two branches of the Roman Church, the one Jewish and the other Gentile. The Jewish section would look to St. Peter, the Apostle of the circumcision, the Gentile section to the great Apostle of the heathen—St. Paul. In this way the early tradition that the Roman Church owed its existence to the two great Apostles, Peter and Paul, may be explained. St. Paul had hitherto (up to A.D. 58) not set foot in Rome; he had designed to pay this Church a visit, but as yet had been hindered.[2] In the meanwhile he sends them his Epistle as a proof of his love and zeal for their welfare, since God had made him to be "the minister of

[1] Rom. xv. 20.

[2] Rom. xv. 19–25, 28, 29.

Jesus Christ to the Gentiles." The four main propositions of this Epistle are: (1) that all are guilty before God; (2) that all stand in need of a Saviour; (3) that Christ died to save all men; (4) that all are one body in Christ. The power of faith to justify man is insisted upon, and the works of the law are shown to lack this saving efficacy.

We have now come to the end of the second group. Four Epistles are given to us, and each is full of the deep things of God.

The First Epistle to the Corinthians breathes the spirit of Christian unity and love; the Second to the Corinthians is full of consolation, and offers a glimpse into the great heart of the Apostle; the Epistle to the Galatians proclaims the liberty of the gospel; while in the Epistle to the Romans the dogmatic position of faith as the basis of spiritual relationship with God in Christ is worked out in great detail.

"Lead us, great teacher Paul, in wisdom's ways,
And lift our hearts with thine to heaven's high throne;
Till faith beholds the clear meridian blaze
And sunlike in the soul reigns love alone."[1]

"Egregie doctor Paule, mores instrue,
Et nostra tecum pectora in cœlum trahe,
Velata dum meridiem cernat fides,
Et solis instar regnet caritas."

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[1] Hymn at Vespers and Matins in *Brev. Rom.* for the Feast of St. Paul, Jan. 25.

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) 1 Cor. i. 10–14. The evil of party strife seems to have disturbed the Church from the first. The Church is called after one Name alone, the Name of her Head—Christ.

(2) 1 Cor. iii. 3–11. St. Paul again reproves the schismatic spirit of the Corinthians. God works by His ministers, and it is God Who alone can make their work effectual.

(3) 1 Cor. xiii. Charity is the love of the soul for God and man. Love is the "bond of peace"; it unites the soul to God, and causes it to live on earth, as far as may be, peaceably with all men.

(4) 2 Cor. i. 3–8. The Apostle encourages all who suffer to take refuge in "the Father of mercies, and God of all comfort." The nearer we are called to God the more we may expect to suffer, until the time comes when "God shall wipe away all tears." See chapter xi. 23–33, "how great things" St. Paul had to suffer.

(5) Gal. v. 16–26. Among the works of the flesh are "hatred, . . . wrath, strife, seditions, heresies." These are often forgotten when the other works of the flesh are remembered.

(6) Rom. viii. 31–39. Our Lord died to save us, and lives to help us; He is therefore anxious for our salvation. If He came to seek and to save the lost, is it likely that He will cast out the lost when they seek Him?

XXVII.

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Epistles of St. Paul (3)

Chronology of St. Paul's Epistles

GROUP III.

PERSONAL AND CHRISTOLOGICAL

Philippians.	About A.D. 62.	Written at Rome.
Colossians.	About A.D. 63.	,, ,,
Philemon.	,, ,,	,, ,,
Ephesians.	,, ,,	,, ,,

XXVII.

The Epistles of St. Paul (3)

WE have now to consider very briefly the third group of the Epistles of St. Paul.

Epictetus, the Stoic philosopher, writes: "Show me some one individual formed according to the principles he professes. Show me one who is sick and happy; in danger and happy; dying and happy; exiled and happy; disgraced and happy." If Epictetus had had St. Paul in his mind he might have recognised the man he sought for apparently in vain in the heathen world. His life was one of continual persecution, and yet he could "rejoice in the Lord alway."[1]

After sending his Epistle to the Romans St. Paul purposed to go up to Jerusalem. All was ready for his departure when he was informed of a sudden plot of the Jews to murder him. The hope of being at Jerusalem for the Passover had to be given up, and St. Paul with seven convert disciples went to Philippi.

After the eight days of the Passover had been fulfilled, St. Paul, about April 4th, A.D. 58, sailed for Troas. After a week had been spent at Troas, St. Paul again set out on his journey, and probably arrived in Jerusalem about May 17th, A.D. 58, the day when the Feast of Pentecost began that year. But there was to be no rest for the Apostle. Nearly torn to pieces by the mob in the Temple,[1] nearly scourged by Lysias, rescued from the rage of the Sanhedrin and the murderous plot of "certain of the Jews," St. Paul was hurried in the night by the soldiers to Antipatris at Cæsarea. For two weary years he was imprisoned at Cæsarea. Twice he was tried—once before Felix and once again before Festus. From Festus' judgment-seat St. Paul appealed to Cæsar, and consequently he was forced to journey to Rome. Arrived in the eternal city he was kept in custody for another two years or so, and during that time he wrote his third group of Epistles. They, like the second group, are four in number: to the Philippians, to Philemon, to the Ephesians, and to the Colossians. The two Epistles to the Philippians and Philemon are the outcome of personal and special incidents; while the other two are eminently Christological, since they are concerned with the pre-existence, the Divinity, and the Headship over the Church of the crucified, risen, and ascended Christ.

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[1] Phil. iv. 4.

Philippi—so named from the great king Philip of Macedon who founded it—was a Roman colony, with full rights of citizenship, and governed by Roman magistrates and laws. The Jews there were but few in number; they had no synagogue, but were allowed to meet for prayer outside the city gates on the river banks. St. Paul, during his first visit to Philippi, had at this "place of prayer" converted Lydia, a proselyte of Thyatira. Here, too, was the scene of his conflict with the pagan authorities that led to his scourging and imprisonment. The Church at Philippi seems to have sprung from the miraculous deliverance from prison of St. Paul and Silas, and the conversion of the jailor. Twice again St. Paul visited this faithful flock, the last occasion being this very year, when on his way to Jerusalem he lingered at Philippi to keep the Passover.[1]

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[1] Acts xxi. 31.

It was in A.D. 61 that St. Paul reached Rome as a prisoner; here "Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him,"[2] and here it was that Epaphroditus, the messenger of the faithful Church at Philippi, found the Apostle in the following year. Epaphroditus brought with him a generous contribution to the necessities of the Apostle, which had been collected by the loving Philippian converts. Epaphroditus fell sick in Rome, and nearly lost his life. On his recovery he was anxious to return to his friends at Philippi, who were in much anxiety at the news of his illness. St. Paul was also desirous that he should hasten home, and took advantage of the opportunity to send to the Philippians an Epistle expressing his thanks for their liberality, and exhorting them to perfection. The Epistle consists of four chapters, in which St. Paul declares his thankfulness for all he had heard of the stedfastness of his converts under persecution, and for their generous gift to himself.[1] The Apostle then tells them of his imprisonment, and how "the things which happened" to him had "turned out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel."[2] He then points to Jesus Christ as the great example of humility, tells them of his intention to send Timothy to them, and relates the illness of their messenger, Epaphroditus, who "for the work of Christ" was "nigh unto death, not regarding his life."[3]

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[1] Acts xx. 5, 6.

[2] Acts xxviii. 16.

St. Paul then urges them to "beware of the concision," and claims that "we are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Jesus Christ, and have no confidence in the flesh";[4] concluding the Epistle with particular admonitions and salutations.

In turning to the Epistle to Philemon we can form no conception of its value without some knowledge of the position that slavery held under the Roman Empire. Slavery was the basis upon which the mighty power of Rome may be said to have rested. For "not only was all domestic service performed by slaves, but the cultivation of the land had fallen almost entirely to them, as well as all works of industry involving hand-labour, in town or country. Even the liberal arts, such as medicine and architecture, were mainly in their hands. . . . The conquest of all the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, accomplished in the hundred and fifty years preceding Christ, flooded the Roman world with slaves. . . . A slave was a piece of property, an animated instrument, something absolutely belonging to his master, a being absorbed in his master's being, by whom he could be given, lent, pledged, exchanged, or sold. . . . The slave had no civil position, no marriage, no paternity.[1]

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[1] Phil. i. 1-12. [2] Phil. i. 13-30. [3] Phil. ii. 30. [4] Phil. iii. 1-21.

"There was according to Roman law and custom no such thing as adultery, no such thing as seduction, no such thing as outrage in the case of slaves. It is needless then to dwell upon the moral character of the male and female slave within the precincts of a Roman palace. . . ."[2] Rome was the centre of the world, and thither came from every subject province a host of slaves, the most accomplished and refined soon to become the most abandoned of both sexes. In vain were laws passed commanding men to marry, and offering rewards to those who had families. There was, moreover, a portion of the wealthy Roman's house called the *pædagogium*, that in which boys were brought up with a certain varnish of education. It was probably a slave of this class for whose sake St. Paul pleaded in the Epistle to Philemon. During a long stay at Ephesus St. Paul had made the acquaintance of a Colossian named Philemon, who, with his wife, Apphia, and his son, Archippus, had been converted to Christ. In this household there was a slave named Onesimus. It is probable that he was a mere lad, since St. Paul calls him his "child," and uses of him the word σπλάγχνα (son of my bowels), a term of affection applied to sons. The name Onesimus means "profitable," and St. Paul alludes to this in the Epistle when he says, "Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me."

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[1] There is abundant evidence, however, that the slave was frequently beloved by his master, and that this love was returned. In the Greek Anthology there are several epitaphs that witness to this reciprocal affection. To quote but one :—

δουλὸς ἐγὼ, ναὶ δουλὸς, ἐλευθερίῳ δέ με τύμβῳ,
δέσποτα, Τιμάνθη τὸν σὸν ἔθευ τροφέα
Εὐαίων ἀσινῆ τείνοις βίον· ἤν δ' ὑπὸ γήρως
πρός με μόλης, σὸς ἐγὼ, δέσποτα, κἠν 'Αΐδῃ.

(*Anth. Pal. Epig. Sepul.* 178.)

Which may be freely translated :—

Only a slave ! yea but a slave,
Yet thou, O master mine,
Thy foster-father slave hast placed
In this free tomb of thine.

Long life to thee, and free from care !
When thou shalt come to me
In Hades thou wilt find me still
A faithful slave to thee.

[2] *Formation of Christendom*, T. W. ALLIES.

Onesimus seems not only to have run away from his master, but to have stolen something from him, or in some way injured him. The poor slave fled from Colosse, and made his way to Ephesus, and then across the Ægean and Adriatic Seas to Rome, where he probably lodged in one of the *insulæ*, or common lodging-houses, where slaves, and paupers, and criminals swarmed together in squalor and misery.

In whatever way Onesimus was drawn to St. Paul, we learn that, falling into the Apostle's hands, he received Holy Baptism and became "the freedman of Christ." The Apostle, however, did not for a moment forget that Onesimus belonged as a slave to Philemon, and doubtless urged upon his convert the duty of returning to his master. But if he returned to Colosse, Philemon would, even if he were more than usually generous, be in no sense transgressing the ordinary customs of his day if he had branded the runaway, tortured him, sold him, or set him to work in chains. St. Paul, with his usual tact, begins the Epistle with reference to the good report he has heard of Philemon. He then pleads for the pardon of Onesimus, identifies himself with the slave, and begs Philemon to forget the injury he has suffered, and to see in his returning servant the penitent Christian brother rather than the runaway slave.

The pathos of this Epistle, written under these circumstances, must appeal to every instructed reader. It is a revelation of the heart of the great Apostle, and incidentally gives a clue to the secret of the Apostle's great influence over the Gentiles. He could enter into the feelings of the master, and he could sympathise with the slave; he could recognise the established custom of slavery, and yet instil a new spirit into the relationship of the master to his slaves. We have only to compare this Epistle with the graceful letter of the younger Pliny to his friend Sabianus to ask pardon for a young freedman who had given Sabianus some offence, to see how differently the pagan and Christian spirit manifested itself. Pliny writes on behalf of a young slave whom Sabianus had once deeply loved. Pliny pleads only the youth and tears of the offender, and the love Sabianus once felt for him. St. Paul, writing on behalf of a criminal and fugitive slave, pleads the claim of the brotherhood of all whom Christ had redeemed. It has been well said that this Epistle to Philemon "became the Magna Charta of freedom throughout the world." We never hear of Onesimus again, though tradition has identified him with a bishop of that name who filled the See of Berea, and with another bishop who ruled the Church of Ephesus. In two MSS. of this Epistle there is a postscript saying that Onesimus was martyred at Rome.

The departure of Onesimus and Tychicus for Colosse[1] offered an opportunity to St. Paul for sending an Epistle to the Church of the Colossians.

Colosse was the chief city of Phrygia, situated in the valley of the River Lycus close to Hierapolis and Laodicea. The origin of this Church is unknown. From Epaphras St. Paul had heard a favourable report of the state of the Christian Colossians, but he had also learned that a dangerous heresy, half Oriental and half Jewish, had appeared in their midst. This heresy consisted in a union of Jewish observances with an extravagant asceticism and the worshipping of angels.[2]

St. Paul begins the Epistle with salutation and thanksgiving, and passes on to consider the unique dignity of Christ, His eternal existence, and shows Him to be the Head of the old natural, and the new moral creation. By His Death, Resurrection, and Ascension Christ effects our reconciliation with the Father.[1] The Apostle warns them not to be beguiled by any strange philosophy, and points out the way in which the Sacrifice of the Cross had fulfilled the typical Jewish oblations.[2] St. Paul then applies Christian principles to everyday life, and treats of the duties of husbands, wives, children, fathers, mothers, and slaves,[3] and concludes with references to Tychicus and Onesimus, and directions as to the circulation of his Epistle.

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[1] Col. iv. 7–9.

[2] Col. ii. 20–23.

In writing to the Ephesians St. Paul had in view the confirmation of the converts from paganism. He does this by showing how they have been called out of the lower life of heathendom into the higher spiritual life in the Catholic Church.

Ephesus was the great centre of Asiatic religion. The Ephesians were especially noted for their licentious and luxurious life; for their magical arts, and above all for their magnificent but sensual worship of Artemis, the personification of natural productiveness. The temple of the goddess was one of the wonders of the world.[4] Pausanias, in his *Description of Greece*, remarks that "the Ionians have a most magnificent country for the fruits of the earth, and temples such as there are nowhere else; the finest for size and opulence is that of the Ephesian Artemis." Another writer[1] says, "Concerning these same Ephesians, Democritus, who was himself an Ephesian, speaks in the first book of his treatise on the Temple of Diana at Ephesus; when relating their excessive effeminacy, and the dyed garments which they used to wear, he uses the expressions: 'And as for the violet and purple robes of the Ionians, and their saffron garments, embroidered with round figures, those are known to everyone; and the caps which they wear are likewise embroidered with figures of animals. They wear also garments of yellow, or scarlet, or white, and some even of purple; and they wear also long robes of Corinthian workmanship; and some of these are purple, and some violet-coloured, and some hyacinth-coloured; and we may also see some which are fiery red, and others of a sea-green colour. One may also see the garments called *actææ*, woven . . . and ornamented with golden millet grains, purple-threaded. . . . The Ephesians use all these things, being wholly devoted to luxury.'"

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[1] Col. i. 1–29. [2] Col. ii., iii., iv. [3] Col. iii. 5 to iv. 6.

[4] In the *Metamorphoses* of Appuleius we read: "Diana Ephesia, cujus nomen unicam, multiformi specie, ritu vario, nomine multijugo, totus veneratur orbis."

St. Paul, in writing to these Ephesians, does not attempt to separate practical from dogmatic religion. If the Ephesians are to live a Christian life, it can only be because they recognise Christ as both God and man, the all-holy and perfect Ideal of humanity. Hence the Epistle is divided into two sections, the first three chapters being doctrinal, the other three practical. Christ is to be all in all, and every relationship of life is to be consecrated through Him to God.

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[1] ATHENÆUS, *Deipnosophists*, xii. 29.

This faith in Christ alone can lift them out of the power of that fascinating sensual world that is round about them.

All the magnificence of Ephesus has now departed like a dream. In the present day nothing remains of Ephesus but a wretched village. Even the ruins of the great temple were lost sight of until some excavations were made in 1869.

The lines in the Palatine anthology, whatever calamity they were intended to commemorate, but faintly express the complete ruin that has fallen upon this once most famous city.[1]

> O clouds of heaven, whence came those cruel streams
> That in one single night have swept away
> Not Libyan huts but countless palaces,
> And all the wealth that Ephesus had stored
> Through the long happy years? O whither have
> Her guardian gods turned their averted gaze?
> Alas! thou wast by far the most renowned
> Of fair Ionia's cities: now thou art
> Laid low, o'erswept by surging waters wild,
> That onward sweep toward the restless sea.[2]

In the third group of Epistles which we have now outlined, we learn from the Epistle addressed to the Philippians how to rejoice even in the midst of troubles and sorrows; from the Epistle to Philemon the brotherhood of man; from the Colossian Epistle that Christ is all in all; from the letter to the Church at Ephesus the Headship of Christ over His Church.

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[1] *Urbs celebratissima.*

[2] *Ἠέριαι νεφέλαι.* Epig. demonst. 424.

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) Phil. i. 21–30. St. Paul speaks of the "being with Christ" as his hope after death. The souls of the faithful are, according to the Catholic belief of East and West, admitted into heaven as soon as they are cleansed from all stain.

(2) Phil. iii. 7–15. We too should not allow the past (*v.* 13) to hinder our use of present opportunities. If we have failed or sinned greatly in the past all the more reason for zeal in the present.

(3) Col. i. 9–21. St. Paul's prayers for the Church do not cease; and in the Communion of Saints he doubtless still intercedes for the Church. It is the Blood of Christ that secures "our peace" with God, since it is the proof of His love for us.

(4) Col. iii. 1–7. The Apostle takes it for granted that Christians are "risen with Christ." They are buried with Him and raised with Him in order to walk in newness of life.

(5) Eph. ii. 13–22. Here again the Precious Blood is the price of salvation, and the glory of the Church of the redeemed.

(6) Eph. iv. 1–14. Each has a "vocation" to follow Christ, but the mode of life in which He is to be followed is also a "vocation." One is called to one occupation, another to something else, but all are called to one faith.

XXVIII.

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Epistles of St. Paul (4)

Chronology of St. Paul's Epistles

GROUP IV.

PASTORAL

1 Timothy. A.D. 65 or 66. Written in Macedonia (?).
Titus. A.D. 66. Written in Macedonia.
2 Timothy. A.D. 67 or 68. Written in Rome.
(St. Paul's martyrdom, A.D. 68, at Rome.)

The chronology of the last years is doubtful. The above are the more usually accepted dates, but some give 1 Timothy and Titus A.D. 64, 2 Timothy A.D. 66, and make this the year of the Apostle's martyrdom.

XXVIII.

The Epistles of St. Paul (4)

THERE yet remains the fourth group—the Pastoral Epistles. St. Paul had been freed from prison when he took up his pen to address his first Epistle to Timothy. He had gone to Macedonia, and on his way had left Timothy in charge of the Church at Ephesus. The difficulties that met St. Timothy in this work called forth from his master a letter of counsel. The first part of the Epistle touches upon the ever-recurring Jewish controversy.[1] In the second portion certain rules are laid down to guide St. Timothy in his relations with his presbyters and people;[2] while in the concluding chapter St. Paul reverts to the treatment of heretical teachers, and gives his disciple certain practical directions.

It has been noticed that this Epistle differs somewhat in style from the great Pauline Epistles, and this difference has led some to doubt its genuineness. There is, however, no sufficient reason to question its authorship. The letters of St. Paul have a human as well as a Divine side; that is to say, the Epistles are in a very real and true sense St. Paul's own work—the expression of his own mind—as well as the inspired word of God. It may well be, then, that in these more personal and familiar Pastoral letters St. Paul does not maintain quite the same exalted level as in the Epistles to the Galatians, Romans, or Ephesians.

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[1] 1 Tim. i. 3–20.

[2] 1 Tim. ii.–v.

The First Epistle to Timothy is the outpouring of the heart of the great Apostle to a man much younger than himself, his most intimate friend and disciple. The Epistle is, in fact, saturated with Pauline characteristics of expression; and some familiar pieces of advice, notably that to drink no longer only water, are just those little touches that suggest the continuance of St. Paul's care for one who, although now a man, had been associated with him from his early youth. Again, who but St. Paul could have combined with much that was of temporary interest such eternal truths as those that are scattered throughout every chapter?

During this same year—A.D. 67[1]—St. Paul wrote his letter to Titus, whom he calls "mine own son after the common faith." Titus was probably one of the converts to Christianity made by St. Paul during his first missionary journey. He accompanied the Apostle to the Council at Jerusalem when the question as to the circumcision of Gentile converts was settled.

After being sent on missions to the Church at Corinth,[2] Titus was appointed Bishop of the Church in

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[1] A.D. 64, according to some chronologists.

[2] 2 Cor. viii. 6; Gal. ii. 3.

Crete. The Cretans were notorious for immorality, untruthfulness, and fickleness. The Epistle, sent to Titus by St. Paul to encourage him in his work and counsel him in the difficulties of his office, is of much the same character as the First Epistle to St. Timothy.

It is worthy of notice how prominent in this Epistle is the thought of Jesus Christ as "the Saviour."

St. Paul writes that his apostleship came "according to the commandment of God our Saviour."[1] His salutation is one of "Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour."[2] In the next chapter servants are exhorted to be faithful, "that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things."[3] In the following verse it is "the grace of God that bringeth salvation," that "hath appeared to all men."[4] Again, the thought of the Christian is to be fixed upon "that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."[5] It is to "the kindness and love of God our Saviour"[6] that we owe our vocation; and lastly, the gift of the Holy Spirit is also "shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour."[7] Thus in three short chapters there are no less than seven notable passages in which the redemption is prominently set forth. There are other dominant conceptions in this Epistle very worthy of attention — such as the six references to teaching or doctrine in connection with

[1] i. 3. [2] i. 4. [3] ii. 10. [4] ii. 11.
[5] ii. 13. [6] iii. 4. [7] iv. 6.

soundness or incorruption. This union of orthodoxy and sobriety—this agreement between dogma and practice—constitute that "godliness" which is so much insisted upon through the Epistles of St. Paul.

The Second Epistle to Timothy was written shortly before St. Paul's martyrdom during his second imprisonment at Rome. At Troas St. Paul was arrested and taken to Ephesus, and thence to Rome, where he was no longer allowed—as during his first imprisonment—to dwell in his own hired house, but was cast into the gloomy dungeon of the Mamertine Prison, chained night and day to his soldier guard. At his first trial before the inhuman Emperor Nero, the Apostle tells us that he was forsaken by all men—"No man stood with me. . . . I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge." It was during the brief respite that followed this first trial that St. Paul wrote his Second Epistle to Timothy. "Since the day when the young Lycaonian boy had come to share his travels and dangers, Paul had grappled him to his soul with hooks of steel; and if he has one earthly wish left it is to see again before he dies that dear friend of earlier days. He writes therefore to urge him to do his best to come—to come with all speed—to come before winter storms have closed the Mediterranean, or else, as he intimates not obscurely, he will find him dead. For the time of his departure was at hand. In reading the Second Epistle to Timothy we are reading the last words of St. Paul." The last written words of the great Apostle are the prayer for Timothy, his beloved friend: "The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen."

We have in this Epistle a glimpse at the tender, human heart of the Apostle, grown old in his fight for the faith; he is near death, but he is not the less desirous of human love and sympathy. Again and again he invites his friend to hasten to his side: "Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me"; "Take Mark and bring him with thee . . . when thou comest. . . . Do thy diligence to come before winter."

St. Paul knew nothing of that false "detachment" from all human love that is so dear to some mediæval and modern spiritual writers. Like his Master, he loved his disciples not merely with a supernatural, "detached" love for their spiritual welfare, but with a strong human love for their own sake. And who shall say there is imperfection in these human ties that God Himself has hallowed?

We come, then, to the end of the last group of these great letters. The First Epistle to Timothy and that to Titus may be called the priest's manual; the second to Timothy is the Epistle of courage, and triumph, and victory over the power of death.

Did Timothy reach the Apostle in time to comfort him in his last hour? We cannot tell. "We may hope that Paul's last earthly wish was fulfilled. Yet if Timotheus did indeed arrive before the closing scene, there could have been but a very brief interval between his coming and his master's death. For the letter which summoned him could not have been despatched from Rome till the end of winter, and St. Paul's martyrdom took place in the middle of summer. We have seen that this was sooner than he had expected; but we have no record of the final stage of his trial, and cannot tell the cause of its speedy conclusion. We only know that it resulted in a sentence of capital punishment.

"The privileges of Roman citizenship exempted St. Paul from the ignominious death of lingering torture, which had been lately inflicted on so many of his brethren. He was to die by decapitation; and he was led out to execution beyond the city walls, upon the road to Ostia, the port of Rome. As he issued forth from the gate his eyes must have rested for a moment on that sepulchral pyramid which stood beside the road, and still stands unshattered, amid the wreck of so many centuries, upon the same spot.

"As the martyr and his executioners passed on, their way was crowded with a motley multitude of goers and comers between the metropolis and its harbour—merchants hastening to superintend the unloading of their cargoes—sailors eager to squander the profits of their last voyage in the dissipations of the capital—officials of the government, charged with the administration of the Provinces, or the command of the legions on the Euphrates or the Rhine—Chaldean astrologers—Phrygian eunuchs—dancing-girls from Syria with their painted turbans—mendicant priests from Egypt howling for Osiris — Greek adventurers, eager to coin their natural cunning into Roman gold—representatives of the avarice and ambition, the fraud and lust, the superstition and intelligence of the Imperial world. Through the dust and tumult of that busy throng, the small troop of soldiers threaded their way silently, under the bright sky of an Italian midsummer. They were marching, though they knew it not, in a procession more truly triumphal than any that had ever followed in the train of General or Emperor along the Sacred Way. Their prisoner, now at last and for ever delivered from his captivity, rejoiced to follow his Lord 'without the gate.'[1] The place of execution was not far distant; and there the sword of the headsman ended his long course of sufferings, and released that heroic soul from that feeble body. Weeping friends took up his corpse, and carried it for burial to those subterranean labyrinths, where, through many ages of oppression, the persecuted Church found refuge for the living and sepulchres for the dead.

"Thus died the Apostle, the Prophet, and the Martyr; bequeathing to the Church, in her government and her discipline, the legacy of his Apostolic labours; leaving his Prophetic words to be her living oracles; pouring forth his blood to be the seed of a thousand martyrdoms. Thenceforth, among the glorious company of the Apostles, among the goodly fellowship of the Prophets, among the noble army of Martyrs, his name has stood pre-eminent. And wheresoever the holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge God, there Paul of Tarsus is revered, as the great teacher of a universal redemption and a catholic religion—the herald of glad tidings to all mankind."[1]

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[1] Heb. xiii. 12.

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) 1 Tim. ii. 1–7. Intercessory prayer is a *duty*, and one we often overlook. The "State Prayers" at Matins and Evensong are of value to the nation, and hence to the Church.

(2) 1 Tim. iv. 1–9. "Bodily exercise" (*v.* 8) is probably bodily penance or mortification. It is only of slight value as compared with spiritual self-discipline.

(3) 1 Tim. vi. 11–19. What we are to fly and what to follow is here set forth.

(4) Titus iii. 1–11. These practical duties are the outward proof of inward likeness to Jesus Christ.

(5) 2 Tim. ii. 8–17. "Remember!" The Resurrection is an essential part of the gospel. We must beware of those who explain away the miraculous in the life of our Lord. "If Christ be *not* risen, then is your faith vain"—a delusion.

(6) 2 Tim. iii. 1–8. Here are some headings for self-examination.

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[1] *The Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, CONYBEARE and HOWSON.

XXIX.

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Immortality of the Soul

Prophecy

"In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." (Eccl. xi. 6.)

Jesus Christ

"So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth her fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come." (St. Mark iv. 26–29.)

The Soul

"And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed his own body." (1 Cor. xv. 37, 38.)

XXIX.

The Immortality of the Soul

THE growth and extension of Christianity is related to the decadence of paganism as cause is related to effect. The development of the one involved the decay of the other. The Incarnate Word was "the seed" that fell upon soil long prepared. The Sacred Humanity was as it were the "bare grain . . . of wheat," but within It lay the force of a Divine life. Coming into the world, the Eternal Word drew to Himself all the scattered truths that had hitherto found no home. In Jesus Christ these truths were brought together, and their correlation was established; they were, so to speak, absorbed by Him; so that He alone could dare to say not merely, I teach what I believe to be the truth; but—"I am the Truth."

The life-germ of truth was not, however, destined to "abide alone." It was to fall into the ground in order that it might bring forth "much fruit."[1]

From the garden tomb the risen Lord came forth clothed with immortality to die no more, and from His risen life there sprang through the operation of the Holy Spirit His mystical Body, the Church. This mystical Body of Christ, conceived by the Holy Ghost, was destined, like the natural body of our Lord, to hide a life-force within itself. Outwardly it seemed "bare grain"—feeble, despised, lifeless. It contained, nevertheless, the Divine energy that was to enable it, when it was planted in the midst of Judaism and paganism, to absorb all that was most valuable in that rich soil, and produce, nevertheless, a fruit entirely its own. What the Apostle wrote of the resurrection body was to be realised also in the mystical Body of Christ. "That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed his own body."[1]

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[1] St. John xii. 24.

If we would find an answer to the problem why ethical Christianity is to the forefront in the teaching of our Lord, and the dogmas of the Creed in the forefront of the Christianity of the fourth century, we shall have to examine the soil in which the ethical teaching was planted. Christianity was to be a religion of the heart and life. It had to gain the moral assent of the nations before it could enter upon the minute investigation of the Person of its Founder. The Divine order was "repent," "believe"; do "His will," and then "know of the doctrine."[2] It was providentially ordained that the seed should be quickly transferred from Semitic to Greek soil. It was the Greek philosophy and education that enabled the Church to express heavenly truths in the language of men.

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[1] 1 Cor. xv. 37, 38.
[2] St. John vii. 17.

The Christian Church was then a Divine life-force; as it grew it absorbed all the nourishment of the soil in which it was planted; it drew into itself all that could foster life, and thus necessarily caused all rival growths to sicken and die.

In the natural order, the soil cannot by any possible combinations of the materials of which it is composed produce the harvest, unless the seed of wheat be planted in its bosom. The atmosphere contains certain gases,[1] and the soil certain properties;[2] the soil and the atmosphere contain together all the elementary bodies which we find in the plant, but the plant is no mere aggregation of these bodies. The plant grows not by addition from without, as a crystal or salt, but by interior assimilation. The plant separates the bodies that are in the soil and atmosphere, and joins them together afresh. The albumen, gluten, and starch, that are characteristic of the plant's body, have no place in the soil, or in the water, or in the air. Yet the plant creates nothing; but, having a life-force of its own, from other material supplied to it, it interiorly manufactures and combines the matter which it contains. The harvest is therefore in no sense the produce of the soil as such, or even of the combined forces of the soil and atmosphere. The harvest is the product of the seed of wheat nourished and fertilised by the soil and by the atmosphere. Even so is that seed which is "the word of God."[1]

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[1] Oxygen, nitrogen, carbonic acid, hydrogen.

[2] Clay, sand, lime, iron, potash, phosphorus, sulphur, etc.

Our Lord compared the kingdom of God — the Church — to seed cast upon the earth: "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground."[2]

To His Church He gave a Divine life-force that was destined to draw into itself all that was valuable in the pre-Christian systems; it was to be sown first in Jewish soil and then transplanted in order that it might be fostered and developed by the philosophies, mythologies, and worships of ancient Greece and Rome. It was, however, destined to produce a fruit peculiarly its own. It is the province of history to try to discover how the soil ministered to the growth of the Church; how Christianity worked up the raw materials of the soil of Judaism and paganism, separating its elementary bodies and joining them together afresh; rejecting this, absorbing that; now hindered and now helped by its environment, but steadily developing and ripening for the harvest.

When we apply these thoughts to the teaching of our Lord and His Apostles, we have to consider first whether what was taught was entirely a new revelation or whether it was teaching that presupposed a certain belief in those who were addressed. The doctrine of the Trinity and Unity of God, and of the redemption of the world, may be given as examples of doctrines that were hitherto unknown. But even these new revelations needed the aid of Greek thought to find anything like adequate expression in human language.

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[1] St. Luke viii. 11.

[2] St. Mark iv. 26.

On the other hand, the human intellect, enlightened doubtless by that Divine Word Who, St. John says, "lighteth every man that cometh into the world," had very generally arrived at a belief in the existence of God, and the duty of worship. The survival of the soul after the death of the body, its immortality, and the doctrine that the future life was one of reward or of punishment, were also beliefs accepted by the greater part of the Jewish world, and familiar to the more thoughtful among the pagans. We have then, in considering any doctrine of our Lord, to ask what preparation there had been for His teaching in the Jewish Church; and consequently in what sense those who heard Him would understand His words: whether or no our Lord confirmed or contradicted the received belief of His day. In the teaching given by the Apostles to the Gentiles we must ask the same question. The truth as to any doctrine will be found in the final belief of the Church. Those who do not regard the Church as the Divine teacher will necessarily, if they are Christians, be left in uncertainty on many points that the Bible does not plainly decide.

We remember, however, that it was to the Church that our Lord said, "Go . . . teach all nations." The written Word of God is the volume God gave to His Church, and contains all that is necessary for Christian belief; but it does not in the least follow that, taken apart from the voice of the Church, each individual will be able to harmonise its often apparently contradictory teaching. The Bible was never, as far as we know, meant to be the teacher sent from God; it was to bear witness down the ages to the antiquity of the message of the Church, according to the old saying: "Ecclesia docet, probat scriptura"—"The Church teaches, the Scripture proves."

The survival of the soul after the death of the body was a belief that grew upon the consciousness of the pre-Christian world, but never attained to the position of a universally accepted belief. In the writings of the Old Testament, as well as in the literature of pagan antiquity, the survival of the soul seems to have ranked as what we should now call "a pious opinion." The teaching of our Lord undoubtedly confirmed this opinion, but we can hardly say that either our Lord or His Apostles affirmed in unmistakable language what is usually called the doctrine of the immortality of the soul.

The pre-existence of the soul before its union with the body and the survival of the soul in an eternal existence after its separation from the body was taught by Plato; this teaching undoubtedly exercised great influence upon the world—Jewish as well as Gentile—

so that the Jewish belief in the survival and immortality of the soul is more clearly expressed in the deutero-canonical books, written by men in contact with Greek thought, than it is in the purely Hebrew Scriptures.

Christianity assimilated the belief as to the survival of the soul after death, while it rejected the doctrine of pre-existence. The Scriptures of the New Testament, however, do not discuss the question whether or no this survival is due to the essential permanence of the human soul, neither do the Scriptures tell us plainly that because the soul survives death it must survive everlastingly. What the writers of the New Testament do assert is that "the gift of God is eternal life,"[1] and that the soul departing from the body in the grace of God will enjoy life everlasting. What, however, concerns those who belong to the Church is not whether or no they, as individuals, can find this or that doctrine in Holy Scripture, but what as a whole the Church of God has taught men to believe to be the truth.

The seed of Divine teaching given by Jesus Christ, fostered by the enlightened Greek thought, and moulded and nourished by the Holy Spirit, has undoubtedly resulted in the doctrine of the soul's immortality being accepted throughout Christendom as the truth. In its growth the Divine seed has worked up the raw materials of Jewish and pagan speculation; separated and joined together afresh their elementary beliefs. It is sufficient to say that nothing in the Bible contradicts this belief;

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[1] Rom. vi. 23.

while very much, as might be expected, supports it. The most enlightened human intellect has not been able to find any reason why the soul, if it can survive death, should ever cease to exist, since the soul appears to be a spiritual substance simple and indivisible; and, unlike the body, is not endangered by sickness, decay, or other evils.

Plato wrote in the *Phædo:* "When death assails a man, the mortal part of him, as appears, dies, but the immortal forthwith departs, safe and incorruptible, giving place to death. Beyond all else, then, is the soul an immortal and indestructible being; moreover, our souls will in reality survive in Hades." No one of course questions that God *could* annihilate the soul, but there is no warrant for the assertion that God does so.

The acceptance of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, however, will depend probably upon the view we come to of the authority of the Church. It must be confessed that from "the Bible, and the Bible only," the essential immortality of the soul, as distinct from its survival after the death of the body, cannot be proved.[1]

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[1] I have discussed the doctrine—pagan and Christian—of the immortality of the soul more fully in my book, *The Soul, Here and Hereafter.* Those who desire to see the Bible teaching alone on this point, may find a thorough and admirable discussion of the question in *The Last Things,* by Dr. AGAR BEET.

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) Isa. xxviii. 10, 11 (with marginal reading). We are taught that God has slowly been leading men to the truth. What is clear from the first in Holy Scripture is the value of character and well-doing. If men live as they should live, there will be no need to fear the hereafter. "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." (Gen. iv. 7.)

(2) 2 Sam. xii. 15–24. "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." David evidently knew of the future life, since at death his body could not be said to "go to" his child, but to corruption.

(3) Isa. xxvi. 19. The resurrection of the body was believed in among the Jews—not among the Gentiles. But the survival of the soul was more clearly taught by the Gentiles than the Jews.

(4) Wisdom iii. 1–9. The Book of Wisdom is of Greek origin, and was written in Greek. Its teaching is clear about the survival of the soul, and its conscious existence after separation from the body. "The hand of God" (*v.* 1) recalls our Lord's words: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit."

(5) St. Luke xvi. 19–31. It would seem that our Lord here is not so much insisting on the temporal or eternal punishment of Dives, as upon the severity of the penalties meted out hereafter. Our Lord distinctly accepts the Jewish and Gentile belief as to Tartarus and Abraham's bosom, and works out the parable in accordance with it.

(6) St. Matt. xxv. 31–46. In the last verse the duration of each state is represented to be the same. The one is "everlasting punishment" (*εἰς κόλασιν αἰώνιον*); the other "life eternal" (*εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον*).

XXX.

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Holy Scripture and Inspiration (1)

Prophecy

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." (Gen. ii. 7.)

Jesus Christ

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (St. Matt. iv. 4.)

The Soul

"When ye glorify the Lord, exalt Him as much as ye can; for even yet will He far exceed: and when ye exalt Him, put forth all your strength, and be not weary; for ye can never go far enough. Who hath seen Him, that he might tell us? and who can magnify Him as He is? There are yet hid greater things than these be, for we have seen but a few of His works. For the Lord hath made all things; and to the godly hath He given wisdom." (Ecclus. xliii. 30–33.)

XXX.

Holy Scripture and Inspiration (1)

NATURE, the Church, and Holy Scripture are three abiding creations of the Word of God.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Some great catastrophe seems to have befallen this primal creation, for the present order of the universe is represented as being a re-formation: "And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." The creation developed, by the Word of God and the Spirit of God, until the heavens and the earth were finished, and declared to be "very good." Thus the material order owes its existence to God. "By the word of the Lord," says the Psalmist, "were the heavens made, and all the hosts of them by the breath of His mouth." It was not merely the spoken word, but the Eternal Word, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, Who thus co-operated in the calling into existence of the natural order of the universe.

St. John—the Apostle of the Word of God—writes:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made."[1]

In this natural order man holds the highest place; he is the most perfect of all the works of God, sharing with his Creator not only life, but reason and freewill. In Nature God wills that we should have an enduring result of His creative word. Nature was to be at once a work of God and a witness for God. Its silent voice should proclaim to the reason and conscience of man the existence of the Creator. This St. Paul insisted upon in his Epistle to the Romans: "The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead"; so that they who refused to glorify God were "without excuse."[2]

According to the belief known as "the gospel of Creation,"[3] the Incarnation of the Eternal Word was the design of God from the beginning, and did not depend upon the Fall of man. In his creation man was "inspired" or breathed into by God. We read, "And the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and *breathed into*[4] his nostrils the breath of life."

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[1] St. John i. 3.

[2] Rom. i. 20.

[3] For a statement of this doctrine, see *The Epistles of St. John*, Dr. WESTCOTT.

[4] "Et *inspiravit* in faciem ejus spiraculum vitæ." (Gen. ii. 10. Vulg.)

This communication of the life of God, it is believed, carried with it more than merely natural life; it communicated to man a knowledge of God that made it possible for man to love and serve God. It is essential that God should be known if He is to be loved and worshipped rightly.

The Fall of man through disobedience forfeited in a great measure this knowledge of God; and hence man, being ignorant of God, failed to love and serve Him. By sin the intellect was darkened, the affections corrupted, and the will averted from God. Man's inner being became the seat of a discord that, left to itself, tended to become greater and greater. Somewhat of the curse that sin brought into man's inner life is represented as falling also upon the earth out of which man had been formed:[1] "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; . . . thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee."

St. Paul, writing of the curse that thus through man fell upon the world, points out the truth that it will be removed when its cause is done away. It came through man, and only through the "redemption of the body" can it be removed. The "new heavens and the new earth" will accompany the new life of the resurrection. "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."[1]

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[1] The doctrine of Evolution is not necessarily out of harmony with what is told us in Genesis of man's creation.

In the final restoration, when man is refashioned in the resurrection into the image and likeness of God, he will necessarily regain—though in an even more perfect way than at the first—that knowledge of God which he lost in the Fall; he will, through this clear light that comes from the restored intercourse with the Creator, be enabled to offer for all eternity perfect love and perfect worship. "Now," writes St. Paul, "we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face."[2] Death was the visible shadow of sin. When death, "the last enemy"[3] of man and of God, is finally overcome by life, then all the darkness of the spirit of man, that is symbolised by bodily decay and death, will also be enlightened.

During the four thousand years that lay between the fall of man and the Incarnation, God seems to have communicated sufficient light to men through certain among themselves who were called apart, and in a special sense "inspired" by Him for that purpose. This "inspiration" was a supernatural illumination of the dimmed spiritual vision of man—a partial withdrawal of the veil that sin had drawn over his spiritual sight. Certain chosen men were enabled to contemplate with a Divine intuition the truth as it existed still among the ruins of the moral and physical worlds.

[1] Rom. viii. 22, 23. [2] 1 Cor. xiii. 12. [3] 1 Cor. xv. 26.

This inspiration was, in varying degrees, given to the whole world, and not only to the chosen people. To Israel it was, however, given in a very distinct and full measure, beyond and above anything granted to the heathen.[1] Inspiration is the enlarging or informing of those faculties which man had given to him by nature.

In heathendom the Sibyl and the Pythoness were types of an inspired teacher. Plato speaks of the divine frenzy that distinguishes the true poet from the rest of the world. In the Bible we find that inspiration is bestowed for a special purpose to which it is carefully proportioned. At one time it takes the form of the reception of certain commands directly from God, as in the case of the giving of the law to Moses. At another the historian is guided to select certain facts, and to record certain actions—some good and some bad. At another the prophet, witnessing the struggles, the sins, the dangers of his time, is "inspired" to seize the lesson that these events should teach, or to point out the remedy that needs to be applied. What the historian records and the prophet proclaims is overruled by God to convey to all ages a spiritual lesson over and above the immediate meaning of the words at the time they were written.

Or again, the experiences of the psalmist, at one time penitent, at another glad, are poured forth—the true expression of his own individual grief or joy, and yet for all time supplying words for the penitence and the thanksgiving of God's Church.

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[1] Rom. iii. 2.

Or, once again, the "inspired" writer addresses an epistle to his converts to meet the needs of the passing hour—but his words live on, and apply to the Christian of every age the great message of the gospel, and its bearing upon everyday life. But wherever we look there is the same mixture of the human with the Divine. The character of the inspired writer shows itself as distinct from the message. God does not destroy but uses the individuality of him who is inspired.

The Spirit of God speaks through the lawgiver, the prophet, the psalmist, or the apostle, but that in no way hinders the manifestation of the natural characteristics of each.

"It is not enough that the sacred teacher should gaze upon the eternal truths of religion; . . . he must be able to represent them fitly to other men. . . . The Book is thus rightly said to be inspired no less than the Prophet. . . . The form in which truth is represented must be examined in relation to the age in which the revelation was made. . . . At one time it is to be sought in the simple relations of the patriarchal household; at another in the more complicated interests of national existence; at another in the still deeper mysteries of individual life; at another in the infinite fulness of the Saviour's work, or in the perplexing difficulties which beset the infant Churches: but each form has its proper and enduring lesson."[1]

In this way God has, to some extent, counteracted the effect of the Fall in so far as sin involved ignorance of the Divine will.

During long ages "He spake by the prophets," but this was only a preparation for the time when He should speak more plainly "by His Son."[2]

In the natural order of the universe we are constantly in the presence of mystery—things that baffle the reason and understanding. Nature witnesses plainly for God, but she does not present her witness plainly, without apparent contradictions. It is only by degrees, "here a little, and there a little," that science is reading this book of Nature; and if it is the same with that other book that God has given us in the Holy Scriptures we need not be perplexed or surprised.

In Nature and in Holy Scripture there is enough to make us sure that we are in the presence of a greater work than human skill could accomplish, and in both cases "the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead."

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[1] *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*, B. F. WESTCOTT, D.D.

[2] Heb. i. 2.

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) Ps. xix. 1–7. "All Thy works praise Thee, O Lord." The fact that there are mysteries in the natural order should prepare us to expect them in the supernatural.

(2) Rom. i. 19, 20. The power of God may be known by His visible works. Only the "fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."

(3) Num. xii. 6–8. Moses was chosen to be God's representative to Israel, and through Moses the people of God were instructed. Moses was in this sense especially "inspired."

(4) Isa. xxviii. 9–14. God taught men according to their ability to receive instruction. Much that is recorded in the Old Testament as done by "righteous" men was not according to the mind of God.

(5) 2 Kings i. 1–16. Here we have an example of the kind alluded to above (4). For a commentary on the story here told read our Lord's words in St. Luke ix. 54–56.

(6) 2 Peter i. 15–21. "No prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation." (See *v.* 21.) The Church is the interpreter of Holy Writ. That is to say, her doctrine teaches the true meaning of what is read in the Bible, so that we must not reject her teaching on account of some text *we* think opposed to it.

XXXI.

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Holy Scripture and Inspiration (2)

Type

"And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do." (Exod. iv. 15.)

Jesus Christ

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, Whom the Father will send in My Name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (St. John xiv. 26.)

The Soul

"Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." (St. John vi. 68.)

XXXI.

Holy Scripture and Inspiration (2)

THE fall of man not only disastrously affected his own spiritual life; it also brought suffering and death into the world. The shadow of pain fell upon all men, even upon the sinless Son of Man. "There is no question," writes Dr. Westcott, "that everything of suffering and shame connected with the Incarnation was due to the Fall." If man had never sinned it is supposed that the "Gospel of Creation" would yet have necessitated the Incarnation, but redemption would not have been needed. The Incarnate Son would have been the glorious crown of humanity, its matchless ideal; but He would not have shown His love by suffering. As it was, the voices of the prophets were unequal to the task of manifesting God to the world. When therefore the fulness of time ordained by the Divine will had come, God, Who "spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets," sent forth His Son to instruct the world, and make known to men the love of the Father. This we are told by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews: "God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son."[1] "He sent His Word," says the psalmist, "and healed them."[2] The prophet Isaiah had foretold how this healing should be accomplished. It was to be by the Saviour bearing the iniquities of men, and the penalty of pain and death. "Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows. . . . He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed."[3]

Just as the creative word of God in the beginning was embodied and perpetuated in the natural order of the universe, so the redemptive Word of God—the Incarnate Son—was to be perpetuated in the new creation—the Church of Jesus Christ.

This Church was to be the means by which fallen humanity might be restored to the image and likeness of God. It was to contain those means of grace that, rightly used, were to conform men to the pattern life of Christ. Our Lord began to build His Church during the three-and-thirty years.

The words of the Incarnate Word were full of power; they by no means returned to Him Who spake them without accomplishing that whereto they were sent.[4]

Our Lord spake, and His word separated the Apostles from the rest of the disciples, and formed them into one body: our Lord spake, and by His word He imparted

[1] Heb. i. 1, 2. [2] Ps. cvii. 20. [3] Isa. liii. 4, 5. [4] Isa. lv. 11.

power to these ordained ones to baptise, to celebrate the Eucharist, to absolve. That is to say, the Incarnate Word formed the Body of His Church, and then, on the morning of Whit Sunday, He "inspired" it—He breathed into it the breath of life, and it became the living Church of the living God. It was to abide on earth until His coming again, and it was to be ever the outward organism that manifested Him to the world: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Now, one result of the bestowal of the gift of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, one effect of the Pentecostal inspiration, was that they were able to recall to remembrance all the teaching that they had received from their Lord. He had promised that "the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, Whom the Father will send in My Name, *He shall teach you all things*, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."[1] Here we have a twofold promise to the Apostles—the Holy Spirit would "teach them all things," so that the apostolic doctrine would be indeed the teaching of God Himself; and then He would revive in their memory all the doctrines they had already received from Jesus Christ. In hearing the Apostles men heard in reality the voice of the Incarnate Word: "He that heareth you heareth Me."[2]

The same would be true of the Apostles' teaching given in writing. The Divine Spirit inhabiting the

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[1] St. John xiv. 26.

[2] St. Luke x. 16.

Church would enable her to distinguish the writings that were "inspired" from those that were not.

It is of course impossible here to do more than touch upon one or two points that are felt to be difficulties as to the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.

In the first place, many difficulties arise from false notions of inspiration, such as the theory that God dictated the very words that are "written for our learning." The word "inspiration" only occurs twice in our version of the Scriptures. In the Book of Job we read: "The inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding";[1] and St. Paul writes to St. Timothy: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God";[2] or, as it is in the Revised Version, "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable," etc.; but the use of the word "inspiration" in these passages does not explain what we are to understand as the meaning of the word. St. Peter says that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."[3] The Bible nowhere explains more fully what "inspiration" means, and therefore, as the Church also has not given any formal definition on the subject, we must not go beyond the assertion that "inspiration" is a Divine inbreathing—a Divine influence. This Divine influence may sometimes be merely a help to a man to record reverently some matter he had noticed or heard related. At another time it would enable the one inspired to reveal the deep things of God in human language. Inspiration may be therefore looked upon as God's endowment of men for any special work.

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[1] Job xxxii. 8. [2] 2 Tim. iii. 16. [3] 2 St. Peter i. 21.

We must carefully distinguish between *revelation* and *inspiration.* "Inspiration is the breath which fills the sails of the moral being. Revelation is the telescope bringing into range objects which the eye could not discern." Revelation is concerned with making known what lies outside the natural knowledge of man. Inspiration is a keener insight into God's purposes, and into the meaning of life. The greater part of the Bible is not a revelation, but it is all an inspiration.

That is to say, much of the Bible is concerned with the "inspired" record of that which could be, and was known to men by the use of their own natural powers of observation.

The authority of the Bible rests upon a sure basis. "It has evidenced its divine power and won its position by its appeal to the judgment and conscience of many generations."[1]

From the educated and intellectual, from the best and the holiest people, and from men of all sorts and conditions, there comes to us an ever-increasing volume of witness to the unique power and inestimable value of the Book of books—the inspired Scriptures.

And this witness cannot be set aside. If we may say so, the Spirit in the Book and the spirit in man agree together that the Bible is the Word of God. The Bible is quite safe. Whatever mistakes may, through human copyists, have crept into the text, whatever has been wrongly concluded as to the date of this or that book, these and many similar points we may well leave to criticism, and be thankful for whatever it can do for us. The truth never fears the light; all it dreads is, lest rash speculations, hasty conclusions, and vague surmises should be passed off on the unlearned as accepted facts.

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[1] From a valuable popular treatise, *How God inspired the Bible*, T. P. SMYTH, LL.B., B.D.

That there are difficulties in the Bible none will deny who know what they are speaking about, but there are equal difficulties in the other embodiments of God's Word. In the universe, in the Person and work of Jesus Christ, and in the Church, as well as in the Bible, there are difficulties that baffle our understanding; but in all these creations of God there is abundant evidence of a Divine power. What we can see and understand witnesses so clearly to God's handiwork that we are justified in our confident belief that what is now hidden from us will be found eventually to be equally capable of explanation.

If the origin of the Bible is obscure, so also is the origin of life itself, and of the Incarnate Life of the Son of God. Men said, "As for this fellow, we know not from whence He is."[1]

And who can tell with certainty the names of the authors of some at any rate of the books of Holy Scripture?

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[1] St. John ix. 29.

Jesus Christ had a twofold birth. He was "before all worlds," yet also "born in the world."

The life of Jesus Christ presents difficulties quite as great as those found in the historical and political discrepancies, the moral stumbling-blocks, and paradoxical sayings of the Bible. And yet, to use the words of Dr. Farrar, "the widest reasoning and acutest ingenuity of scepticism has never pointed to one complete demonstrable error of fact or doctrine in the Old or New Testament."

We know, also, that the enemies of Jesus Christ found it as impossible to bring a single truthful charge against Him.

The Bible, like Jesus Christ, is set for the fall as well as for the rising again of many. It is a touchstone; and according as the heart of man is right with God will be his attitude towards the Holy Scriptures.

Many, who do not for a moment profess to be able to explain every difficulty that the Bible contains, can say of it—as Nicodemus to our Lord—"We *know* that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do the miracles that thou doest, except God be with him."[1] He who finds in Holy Scripture a stumbling-block will, if he be logical, find each one also in Jesus Christ and in the natural order of the universe.

The influence of Jesus Christ upon the world suggests a unique cause for so unique an effect. That cause is found in His Divinity. The influence of the Bible is also unparalleled, and it can only be explained by the fact that in a unique sense it is the inspired Word of God, and as such it "is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."[1]

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[1] St. John iii. 2.

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[1] 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) Deut. iv. 5–11. Obedience is the best teacher. "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine."

(2) St. Matt. iv. 1–11. Our Lord here rebukes the tempter in each temptation by quotations from the Old Testament. In our times of trial the knowledge of God's Word will often give hope and confidence.

(3) Rom. xv. 1–8. Christ is our great example. His life must be our pattern, His word our guide. This word is contained in the things written in the Old Testament as well as in the New. (See St. Luke xxiv. 27.)

(4) 1 Cor ii. 9–16. The Holy Spirit is the great teacher and guide of the soul; but He never teaches the individual the contrary of what He teaches the Church. Hence they who deny the dogmas of the faith are deluded, however much they may profess to follow Holy Writ. The evil one can quote Scripture texts, but the Church alone can harmonise the whole of revelation. Hence our Lord said, "He that heareth you heareth Me." We must not, however, think that every opinion held in the Church is part of "the faith."

(5) 2 St. Peter iii. 1–11. St. Peter warns the Church against going to the opposite extreme to that of the Thessalonians. They expected the immediate return of our Lord; but these, of whom St. Peter speaks, have lost all faith in His coming again.

(6) 2 St. Peter iii. 11–18. The Apostle teaches us to "look" for the second Advent; this we do by diligence in our daily work, by a blameless life, and by growth in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

XXXII.

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Communion of Saints (1)

Type

"Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim. And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to-morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed." (Exod. xvii. 8–11.)

Jesus Christ

"Great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt."
(St. Matt. xv. 28.)

The Soul

"Brethren, pray for us." (1 Thess. v. 25.)

XXXII.

The Communion of Saints (1)

IN the Epistle for this Sunday,[1] St. Paul impresses upon the Ephesians the need of "praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

The Gospel[2] relates a miracle which our Lord worked in answer to the intercession of "a certain nobleman."

These passages of Holy Writ naturally suggest the thought of the fellowship that exists between the members of Christ.

Day by day in the Apostles' Creed we repeat, "I believe in the Communion of Saints." What do these words mean? and what influence has our belief upon our life?

Every article of the Creed has a practical as well as a doctrinal significance. Our belief in God, in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the Atonement, the Resurrection, the Ascension, has a very practical bearing upon conduct.

We believe, and our faith expresses itself in worship, in prayer, in trust, in self-sacrifice. Or again, our belief in the Holy Ghost bears fruit in our daily life by the endeavour we make to place ourselves under His guidance, and to follow His inspirations. Once more, the belief in the Holy Catholic Church is manifested by submission to her teaching, by the use of her Sacraments and other means of grace, and by taking our part in her public worship. But when we profess our belief in the Communion of Saints, can we as plainly point to its expression in our spiritual life?

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[1] Eph. vi. 10–20.

[2] St. John iv. 46–54.

We have, moreover, to notice, in considering the articles of our faith, that they do not express truths which are easily within the knowledge of any intelligent person. It needs no article of the Creed to tell us that our common humanity carries with it certain obligations of service one to another; or, that as members of the Church we are united in a common faith, and the use of common means of grace. It is true that this fellowship one with another is contained in the idea of the Communion of Saints, and is even an important part of it; but it hardly needs an article of the Creed to make known such an obvious fact. That all the faithful have a special communion one with another in faith, in prayer, and in sacrament, is the elementary and self-evident meaning of the words, "I believe in the Communion of Saints"; but it is very far indeed from exhausting their significance. Bishop Pearson, whose learned work *On the Creed* is one of the standard treatises of the English Church, writes: "This part of the article (Communion of Saints) beareth something a later date than any of the rest, but yet is no way inferior to the other in relation to the certainty of the truth thereof. And the late admission of it into the Church will be thus far advantageous, that thereby we may be better assured of the true intent of it, as it is placed in the Creed. For it will be no way fit to give any other application of these words as the sense of the Creed, than what was then understood by the Church of God when they were first inserted." Bishop Pearson, after referring to that communion or fellowship in possessions and goods among the first Christians, of which we read in the Acts of the Apostles, and showing that the word "Saints" means both the whole body of the baptised and those who in that body excelled the rest in holiness of life, passes to the consideration of the sense in which the words of the Creed are to be understood. He shows in what way the saints have communion with God—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—and with the holy angels, as well as with their fellow-members of the Church militant. He then concludes: "Lastly, the saints of God living in the Church of Christ are in communion with all the saints departed out of this life and admitted to the presence of God."

Bishop Pearson adds this note to those words: "This is that part of the Communion of Saints which those of the ancients especially insisted upon, who first took notice of it in the Creed."

Then the Bishop quotes the words in the Epistle to the Hebrews: "Ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels," and "to the general assembly and Church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant."[1]

We come, then, to the all-important question, What did the Catholic Church understand by these words when she inserted them in the Creed? What influence do these words represent? What practice illustrated them? for we must remember that the words were not suddenly inserted in the Creed and *then* made the pretext for certain beliefs and practices, but, on the contrary, the Church found certain beliefs and practices so much a part of her everyday life, so vital to true belief, that she felt moved to express her belief and practice in these words: "I believe in the Communion of Saints." Now, with this thought in mind, we turn to history, and ask what was the belief and practice of the Church with regard to those departed this life, at the time when this article was added to the Creed. We shall then have to recall the fact—an important one—that this article was not found in any of the earlier forms of the Apostles' Creed. St. Augustine and St. Chrysostom had in their day no such article in the Creed. In fact, this article is first found in a form of the Apostles' Creed in the year 550; that is, not until well on in the sixth century.

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[1] Heb. xii. 22-24.

This fact reminds us, by the way, that the Catholic Church is possessed of authority, and at all events in the sixth century was unfolding and developing her Creed; unfolding, defining, and developing what was already the common faith, mark this—not inventing new dogmas.

The Church then added these words to the Creed —which we have all accepted as the truth of God— in the sixth century; and there is no doubt whatever as to either the faith or practice of the Church at that date.

The writings of the Fathers abundantly prove that in the Primitive Church the faithful were taught the following truths gathered from God's Word:—

(1) That the Church on earth has communion with the Holy Trinity, with the angels, and with "the spirits of just men made perfect," *i.e.* the saints of God who are for ever in the joy of their Lord.

(2) That the Church on earth has communion with the souls of the faithful departed, who are gone before with the sign of faith and sleep in Jesus.

Now, in the first place, as to the spirits of just men made perfect, who are already in the unveiled presence of God—whom we especially call "saints"—we must inquire what the practice of the Church was with respect to these. She taught that the saints in the presence of God are not idle—that they employ their time in the worship of God, and, secondly, as far as they may, in the service of man. The Church believes that the "prayers of saints" which St. John wrote about in his Revelation are offered not for themselves, but for us; that in some way the saints are acquainted with much that it concerns them to know of what is passing on earth. *How* this knowledge reaches them we do not know; it would be heresy to ascribe to the saints the attributes of omniscience or omnipotence. God alone is present everywhere and knows all things. The saints in heaven, then, perform their share of the Communion of Saints by praying for us.

What was the corresponding practice of the Church on earth? Of the practice of the earlier ages—of what we call the Primitive Church—we know this, that the saints, the martyrs and confessors, were held in high esteem; that the anniversaries of their death were kept with solemnity, their example upheld for imitation, their memory revered, their praises proclaimed, their tomb or place of martyrdom visited.

Of the invocation, or direct calling upon the saints for their prayers, there is but a trace here and there during the first three centuries; but, to quote the learned Bishop Forbes in his treatise on the Thirty-nine Articles, "it cannot be doubted that in the latter part of the fourth century, the great Fathers, who secured and transmitted our faith, practised and taught the custom of directly asking the saints to use those intercessions in whose efficacy they believed."

There were no invocations of saints in the Primitive Liturgies or Offices of the Church, and hence the Church of England rejected them in the revision of her service-books in the sixteenth century. She did so because her appeal to Scripture and the Primitive Church obliged her to abandon in public worship a custom which was without any support from either, and had developed to a dangerous extent.[1]

But since the foundation of the Communion of Saints is nothing else than the essential unity of the mystical Body of Christ, so where this unity is maintained there is necessarily communion or fellowship between those who are "one body in Christ." As Bishop Pearson says, "If I have communion with a saint of God, as such, while he liveth here, I must still have communion with him when he is departed hence; because the foundation of that communion cannot be removed by death." When he passes to consider the "acts or external operations" this communion produces, he says they are "not so certain. They which first found this part of the article in the Creed, and delivered their exposition unto us, have made no greater enlargement of this communion as to the saints in heaven, than the society of hope, esteem, and imitation on our side; of desires and supplications on their side."[1]

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[1] In the Roman Communion addresses to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints seem to occupy the chief place in all extra-liturgical prayer. This may be seen in almost any Roman Catholic biography. In sickness, in temporal or spiritual need, the soul seems instinctively to turn to Mary for health, etc. Nor is it merely that her prayers are asked for, but she is addressed as if she were the final "giver of all good gifts." To take but one example, in De Narfon's *Life of Pope Leo XIII.*, in the first fifty-nine pages sickness is mentioned twice. In the first instance the future Pope writes: "We stedfastly pray the most Holy Virgin that our mamma's health may return." The other illness is that of Mgr. Pecci himself (not then Pope); we read: "The inhabitants (of Benevento) marched in a body to the Sanctuary of our Lady of Pardon, and implored the Madonna to restore Mgr. Pecci's valuable health. The Madonna heard their prayer." But if anyone wishes to see the extravagant lengths to which this practice is carried, he may read *True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin*, by De Montfort, translated by F. Faber, and recommended by Cardinal Vaughan. It reveals indeed "another gospel."

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[1] For a full discussion of the question, see *Invocation of Saints*, by H. R. PERCIVAL, D.D.

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) St. Luke xx. 34–39. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living, *i.e.* the living souls of the departed. Only the body dies. The departed saints are "equal unto the angels." The angels have no body—they are pure spirits. (See *v.* 37.)

(2) St. Luke xv. 3–10. The joy of the holy angels implies that they know of the conversion of sinners, and hence the saints who are of their company, and on an equality with them, may also know of things passing on earth.

(3) Heb. xi. 39–xii. 3. The writer of the Epistle speaks of the faithful departed as being a great "cloud of witnesses," hovering around the Church on earth and keenly interested in its progress. The idea seems borrowed from those who gathered round the athletes in the contests of the arena, and encouraged them by their sympathy.

(4) Heb. xii. 22–29. The Church in its union with Christ is said already to have "come unto Mount Sion . . . and the spirits of just men made perfect."

(5) Col. ii. 18–23. The "worshipping of angels" was one of the practices of the early heretical sects. We are only safe from delusion when we follow the authorised teaching and customs of the Church. We are taught to pray to God that the holy angels may "succour and defend us on earth," and consequently we should value their ministry.

(6) Rev. v. 8 and viii. 3, 4. The prayers of the saints are offered before God. The incense may represent the merits of Christ by which alone our prayers or the prayers of the saints are made acceptable.

XXXIII.

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Communion of Saints (2)

Prophecy

" For if he had not hoped that they that were slain should have risen again, it had been superfluous and vain to pray for the dead. And also in that he perceived that there was great favour laid up for those that died godly, it was an holy and good thought. Whereupon he made a reconciliation for the dead, that they might be delivered from sin." (2 Macc. xii. 44, 45.)

Jesus Christ

" Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For He is not a God of the dead, but of the living : for all live unto Him." (St. Luke xx. 37, 38.)

The Soul

"The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day." (2 Tim. i. 18.)

XXXIII.

The Communion of Saints (2)

ST. PAUL in the Epistle for this Sunday[1] assures his Philippian converts of his certainty that God Who has "begun a good work" in their souls "will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." These words exactly express the hope that the Church breathes into prayer for the faithful departed.[2] Nowhere in the Bible or in the teaching of the Church are we taught that the "good work" can *begin* hereafter; but that, once begun here, it may hereafter, by the mercy of God and the merits of the Precious Blood of Christ, be brought to perfection.

Death, as far as we know, is the end of our probation. At the moment when the soul leaves the body it is in one of two states—saved, or lost—that is to say, it is penitent or impenitent.

If the soul is lost (and none but God can know this for certain) it is lost for ever; not all the prayers of the saints in heaven, not all the Eucharists offered by all the priests on earth, nor all the prayers of friends left behind, can ever change or alter that state in the least degree. It is lost because it has rejected God, freely and wilfully, during that only time in which man has power to work out his salvation. The day is over—the night eternal has come when no man can work.

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[1] Phil. i. 3–11.

[2] It is hardly necessary to say that the Primitive Church was wont, as St. Augustine says, "to supplicate for the departed," and the appeal of the Church of England is to the Primitive Church.

With such souls the Communion of Saints has, as far as we know, nothing whatever to do. But there are few, if any, for whom we have no hope; the majority of those we have loved, and who have gone from us, were not of this kind. They in some degree acknowledged God in their ways; they tried, with many failures, to do His will; they have at all events not denied their Lord. Perhaps they have been worldly, have made religion only a secondary motive of life, have been careless about sin, and yet not reckless; what of them? We can only say we hope; but the hope is faint. God is clear and distinct in His warnings against such a life. They have *not* sought first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; they can hardly be said to have loved God at all; their life has been, if not irreligious, yet not distinctly a life subject to God's law. Perhaps in their last illness they have for the first time awaked out of their spiritual sleep; or perhaps their end has come suddenly, and they are gone; no certain assurance is left, but yet we hope. Perilous and dangerous to live and die so! All that can be said of such is—we *hope*—we trust; the thread of hope is thin, but it may hold out. So that while we urge the extreme and awful danger of such a life, we can only hold out a hope that the soul was not quite dead when the body died; that a spark of the life of God remained; and that the All-Merciful may perfect that which is then only just begun. If there were only heaven and hell we could have no hope at all; because for entrance into heaven not only the pardon of sin is required, but the possession of perfect holiness.[1]

Hence, if such a soul is saved, it cannot enter heaven for a while; it must be made perfect. 'For such, if there be salvation, it can only be "so as by fire,"[2] the chastening—the burning out of the stains of even pardoned sin—the difficult advance in holiness—all must surely imply a time of discipline; the soul gradually advancing in peace as progress is made; slowly ascending from the lowest of the many chambers of the house of departed spirits towards the clearer light and brighter realm, where is the presence of God and the joy of His countenance. Saved and forgiven! but only just saved—stained and weak.

Oh, the joy of such a soul! reading its own sad past, and knowing how it might have been shut out for ever. Oh, the joy with which it hastens to that correction which shall make it less unworthy of its

[1] Rev. xxi. 27.

[2] 1 Cor. iii. 15.

Saviour! Its cry has been expressed in the wonderful poem, *The Dream of Gerontius*:—

> "Take me away, and in the lowest deep
> There let me be,
> And there in hope the lone night-watches keep,
> Told out for me.
> There, motionless and happy in my pain,
> Lone, not forlorn,—
> There will I sing my sad, perpetual strain,
> Until the morn.
> There will I sing, and soothe my stricken breast,
> Which ne'er can cease
> To throb, and pine, and languish, till possest
> Of its Sole Peace.
> There will I sing my absent Lord and Love:
> Take me away,
> That sooner I may rise, and go above,
> And see Him in the truth of everlasting day."

If there is hope—and who will forbid it?—for such as these, then this hope becomes certainty for many of our dear ones, gone before with the sign of faith.

How often, after a stormy day, have we not rejoiced in the calm beauty of the evening?

And is not the morn of life too often wasted and chequered by sin, the soul disturbed by early passions? and yet towards evening it is changed into the life of the true penitent.

The life of a Magdalene—rescued from shame, and raised up to be one of service to Jesus Christ.

The life of a Thomas—or a Peter—doubting and denying, and yet in the end dying for the truth and raised to the highest apostolic thrones.

The life of an Augustine—having tasted of the fruits of death and found them bitter, changed into the life of a saint—a pillar of the house of God.

These are but types—types at all events of the sin—though they excel our own dear departed in their repentance and service of God.

Thus comes the Church of God to us, for all who died in the fear of God—for all for whom we have a "sure and certain hope," and she says, "Pray for them."[1] Pray that they may rest in peace—may have more and more of the light of God, and so more quickly end their time of purification and be united with their God.

Of these souls, then—and yet again of those for whom we have a more sure and certain hope—the Church tells us that they need our prayers, and hence we believe and put into practice the faith expressed in these words—"I believe in the Communion of Saints"—by praying for them.

But some may ask, How can we know if a person is saved, and hence in need of our prayers? for if lost it is useless to pray for them.

The answer is that the Church prays for *all.* She cannot tell who is saved—who lost. If, alas! one of those for whom she prays is a lost soul, the prayer, indeed, is of no value to him for whom it is offered, but it ascends as a voice of earth to the throne above in pleading for all in need of prayer. Thus no prayer is wasted.

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[1] It need hardly be said that all the great post-Reformation divines of the English Church have taught the lawfulness of prayer for those who have gone before "with the sign of faith, and sleep in the sleep of peace."

And now let us glance at the evidence in favour of this practice of the Church.

One of the proofs usually given of the existence of God is the universality of the belief in a Supreme Being. It is not Christians alone who believe in God. It is the common belief of mankind; so that they who deny that there is a God are few in number, and those few are well described in the Psalm where we read of them: "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God"; and still greater is the fool who does not keep his folly in his heart, but publishes it to the world!

Even so it is not necessary to be a Christian in order to believe that we have fellowship with the departed. The noblest and greatest of the old heathen world could teach us better doctrine than some modern divines. Cicero says, speaking of rites in honour of the departed, that his ancestors would certainly not have paid them unless they believed such observances affected the dead. Jews, too, not only of the present day, but of the past, could tell us that the memory of the just is blessed, and that the place where it is best to recall their names is at the feet of the most High in prayer.[1]

And if we come to the Christian Church there has been absolutely no doubt or hesitation from the beginning.

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[1] 2 Macc. xii. 41–45.

Every Liturgy of the Church has contained prayers for the faithful departed.

This, then, is the primary meaning of those words we so often repeat: "I believe in the Communion of Saints." I believe that the saints before the throne of God pray for us, and that their example is of great value to us.

I recognise with St. Paul that I owe it to those who have gone before into the nearer presence of our Lord not to forget them, but to name their names when I offer my prayers to God, and especially when I kneel at the altar, and plead the death of His Son. The great Apostle St. Paul prayed for Onesimus, who had departed this life: "The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day";[1] with the Apostle I too may ask for those who are "gone before with the sign of faith," the same grace. With the Church I may pray, "May the souls of the faithful, through the mercy of God, rest in peace"; "Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and light perpetual shine upon them."

My prayer does not imply any doubt of the love and goodness of God, but it is based rather on a full assurance of His mercy; while not unmindful that "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth."[2]

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[1] 2 Tim. i. 18.

[2] Heb. xii. 6.

"When then—if such thy lot—thou seest thy Judge,
The sight of Him will kindle in thy heart
All tender, gracious, reverential thoughts.
Thou wilt be sick with love, and yearn for Him.
And feel as though thou couldst but pity Him,
That one so sweet should e'er have placed Himself
At disadvantage such, as to be used
So vilely by a being so vile as thee.
There is a pleading in His pensive eyes
Will pierce thee to the quick, and trouble thee,
And thou wilt hate and loathe thyself; for though
Now sinless, thou wilt feel that thou hast sinned,
As never thou didst feel; and wilt desire
To slink away, and hide thee from His sight;
And yet wilt have a longing aye to dwell
Within the beauty of His countenance.
And these two pains, so counter and so keen,—
The longing for Him, when thou seest Him not;
The shame of self at thought of seeing Him,—
Will be thy veriest, sharpest purgatory."

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) 1 Cor. xv. 12–15. The "day of Jesus Christ" (see Epistle for Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity) is the day of the resurrection of the body. The soul without the body is not complete, and hence, in one sense, *man* is not "saved" until his body is redeemed from the grave. Christ's Resurrection is the pledge of our own.

(2) 1 Cor. xv. 16–20. Christ is the firstfruits of the restored dead, since, although He was not the first to be raised again to life, He was the first Who raised Himself, and Who did not die again. "Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more."

(3) 1 Cor. xv. 21–34. It is by union with Christ—by spiritual incorporation with Him—that we have a hope of eternal life. Eternal life is "the gift of God."

(4) 1 Cor. xv. 35–39. St. Paul shows that the body laid in the dust is not "that body that shall be."

(5) 1 Cor. xv. 40–49. There will be degrees of glory in the resurrection. We have no knowledge of "a spiritual body." The disciples appear at first not to have recognised our Lord in His spiritual body.

(6) 1 Cor. xv. 50–58. The victory over the power of sin is the first gift of God. Death is the penalty of sin. When sin is abolished, then death also will be overcome, and "there shall be no more death." (See Rev. xxi. 4.)

XXXIV.

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Lord's Prayer

Prophecy

"And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the Name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said." (Joel ii. 32.)

Jesus Christ

"When ye pray, say, Our Father." (St. Luke xi. 2.)

The Soul

"Lord, teach us to pray." (St. Luke xi. 1.)

XXXIV.

The Lord's Prayer

IN the Primitive Church the Lord's Prayer was looked upon as having a sacramental efficacy. Its repetition was especially associated with the pardon of the ordinary sins of the baptised.

St. Augustine writes (A.D. 395): "For the sake of all sins was Baptism provided; for the sake of light sins, without which we cannot be, was prayer provided. What hath the Prayer? 'Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.' Once for all we have the washing in Baptism, every day we have the washing in prayer. Only, do not commit those things for which ye must needs be separated from Christ's body: that be far from you! For those whom ye see doing penance (*agere pœnitentiam*), have committed heinous things, either adulteries or some enormous crimes: for these they do penance. Because, if theirs had been lesser sins, daily prayer would have been sufficient to blot them out. In three ways are sins remitted in the Church—by Baptism, by prayer, by the greater humiliation of penance: yet God doth not remit sins but to the baptised. The very sins which He remits first, He remits not but to the baptised. When? When they are baptised. The sins which are after remitted upon prayer, upon penance, are remitted to the baptised. For how can they say, *Our Father*, who are not yet sons?"[1]

In another place St. Augustine says: "You have the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. What can be briefer to hear or to read? What easier to commit to memory? When as the result of sin, the human race was groaning under a heavy load of misery, and was in urgent need of the Divine compassion, one of the prophets, anticipating the time of God's grace, declared, 'And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be delivered.'[2] Hence the Lord's Prayer. But the Apostle, when, for the purpose of commending this very grace, he had quoted this prophetic testimony, immediately added: 'How then shall they call on Him in Whom they have not believed?'[3] Hence the Creed. In these two you have those three great graces exemplified: faith believes, hope and love pray. But without faith the two last cannot exist, and therefore we may say that faith also prays."[4]

The Lord's Prayer is necessarily the model of all prayers, since Jesus Christ Himself taught the Apostles to pray, not only in the words that He gave to them but after the pattern of that pattern Prayer: "After this manner therefore pray ye."[1]

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[1] *De Symbolo.* See also Reading on "Penance," p. 373.

[2] Joel ii. 32.

[3] Rom. x. 14.

[4] *The Enchiridion*, *De fide*, etc., c. vii.

(1) The Lord's Prayer is composed of seven petitions. Seven is the mystic covenant number, and our Lord designed to make His Prayer to be especially the covenanted channel for obtaining His graces. This Prayer is indeed infinitely perfect, as St. Thomas Aquinas teaches. He quotes St. Augustine's words: "If we desire to pray acceptably, this Prayer provides all that we need to ask."

Prayer is the interpreter of our desires in the presence of God, and we then only pray rightly when we desire that which is desirable. Now, in the Lord's Prayer we ask not only all those things that may be legitimately sought, but we ask for them in their due sequence. Hence this Prayer not only teaches us to pray, but it is the mould that shapes all our desires.[2] It is clear that our first desire is to attain to our last end, and to obtain the means by which to attain to that end.

God is our last end, and our affection may tend towards Him in two ways—by desiring His glory, or by desiring to enjoy His glory. The first of these pertains to that love by which we love God for His own sake: the second has to do with the love by which we love ourselves in God. For this reason the petition, "Hallowed be Thy Name," comes first, for by it we seek God's glory.

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[1] St. Matt. vi. 9.

[2] "Sed etiam sit informativa totius nostri affectus."

In the next petition, "Thy kingdom come," we desire to attain to the glory of His kingdom. The means by which we attain this end operate in a twofold manner—by themselves, or accidentally. When anything by itself is useful for this purpose it is so either directly or instrumentally. For example, obedience to God is in itself and directly useful as a means of attaining to our final reward. Hence we pray, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." The next petition, "Give us this day our daily bread," refers to a means which is also helpful of itself—not, however, directly, but instrumentally: for whether we understand the words of the Eucharist and of all the means of grace, or of our natural bodily food, each is needful if we are to live our bodily life for God.

Accidentally, however, we are led to our final good by the removal of whatever hinders our advance in holiness. Now there are three chief things that impede our spiritual progress. The first of these is sin, which may exclude us altogether from the heavenly kingdom; hence we pray, "Forgive us our trespasses." The second hindrance is temptation, which is, as it were, an endeavour to lead us away from God; hence we pray, "Lead us not into temptation." We do not ask to escape all temptation, but for grace to conquer it. And lastly, the trials and sufferings of life frequently hinder us, and so we beg of our Father to "Deliver us from evil."[1]

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[1] The above is almost all from St. THOMAS' *Summa*, pars ii.-ii. Q. lxxxiii. art. ix.

The opening words of the "Our Father" remind the Christian of the relationship between God and man. He is "our Father." This thought at once disposes the soul to confidence and love. It reminds us also that we are the sons of God by adoption, as well as by creation. But yet again, through union with the Incarnate Son we too have a special claim to be the children of God. Jesus Christ is our Brother: we are all one family. "Our Father which art in heaven"; in heaven God reveals His presence. He is everywhere by His essence, knowledge, and power; but in heaven the glory is manifested. These opening words are fitly followed by the petitions for all that contributes to the glory of God and our own salvation.

The Prayer closes with a return to the first thought of the Fatherhood of God, but with a quickened sense of His majesty and power.

"For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

He is able, as well as willing, to supply all our wants. His power is chiefly shown in acts of mercy and pity. All His works are mercy and judgment; all His works praise Him, and in all He is glorified. He is the same; He changes not "for ever and ever."

Let us remember that God knows our necessities before we ask. He does not so much require us to put these wants into actual words as to present our hearts and wills to Him in prayer. Hence, when words of our own fail us, we can "pray without ceasing,"[1] by offering this Divine Prayer for the intention we desire.

In every spiritual or temporal need, here we have the words in which to express ourselves; we have only to form the particular intention in our mind, and offer it together with the inspired words, and we shall not ask amiss.

It may have been with some such thought as this that the Primitive Fathers call the Lord's Prayer "*The* Prayer." This title suggests the words of the psalmist, which should fill our hearts with sure confidence: "Thou that hearest the prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come."

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[1] 1 Thess. v. 17.

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) St. Matt. vi. 9–15. "Hallowed be Thy Name." God's Name is hallowed by holy worship; by Christian life; by reverence for all holy things. The third Commandment enforces this reverence as a duty.

(2) St. Luke xiii. 18–22. "Thy kingdom come." "The kingdom of God is within you." We hasten this coming by entire subjection of our wills to the will of our King.

(3) 2 Tim. iii. 15–17. "Thy will be done." God's will is revealed to us through His Providence, His Church, and His Word. In each of these the Holy Ghost reveals the will of God. In heaven the angels and saints do God's will perfectly. We pray in our own measure to serve Him equally well.

(4) St. John vi. 45–52. "Give us this day our daily bread." The Lord is the Bread of Life. He feeds us with His Sacred Body and Blood in the Eucharist. Both the supernatural and natural life depend on God. He is the Author and Giver of all good things.

(5) St. Matt. xviii. 23–35. "Forgive us our trespasses." We must be ready to forgive those who ask our forgiveness if we desire God to pardon our sin. "As we forgive them that trespass against us." This is really a prayer that God will *not* pardon us, if we refuse forgiveness of injuries. To be "in love and charity" with our neighbour is a necessary condition for a good Communion.

(6) 2 St. Peter ii. 1–9. "Lead us not into temptation." We must watch and pray against temptation; not recklessly run into it. In the path of duty we shall meet temptation,

and then God will protect those who trust in Him. Temptation is not an evil, but a means of growing in grace. Sin is the yielding to temptation. "Deliver us from evil" is often understood by the Fathers as "Deliver us from the Evil One."

XXXV.

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

"Are there Few that be Saved?"

Prophecy

"All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." (Isa. lii. 10.)

Jesus Christ

"All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." (St. John vi. 37.)

The Soul

"The Lord is my strength and my song, and is become my salvation." (Ps. cxviii. 14.)

XXXV.

"Are there Few that be Saved?"

THE Christian religion is a great fact in the world, and its characteristic is the imitation of Christ.

For those who follow Jesus Christ, St. Paul, writing in the Epistle that is read on this Sunday,[1] speaks of "the hope which is laid up . . . in heaven"; and in speaking of the duty of thankfulness he bases it upon the goodness of God, Who "hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

The Festival of All Saints, coming towards the close of the Christian year, brings before us very forcibly the value of the imitation of Christ; for who are the saints of God but they who have most perfectly been conformed to the image of the Son of God? in the mysterious foreknowledge of God predestined to that end: "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren."[2] Holiness, sanctity, are but other words for being like Christ.

God has revealed that in the judgment of each soul two books are opened. "I saw," St. John says, "the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life."[1]

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[1] Col. i. 3–12.

[2] Rom. viii. 29.

The first book is thought to be the human conscience; but the second book is the book, not of our writing, but of God's—the book of life; that book of which St. Paul speaks in the Epistle to the Philippians, when he says of St. Clement and others that their names "are in the book of life."[2]

It is that book of which our Lord spoke in words which the beloved Apostle may have had in his mind: "Rejoice because your names are written in heaven."[3]

The book of conscience gives the facts and events of our life, and then these are judged by the law of the book of life; by the only true standard of holiness; by the life, teaching, and example of our Master. Thus is it true, that if we have borne the image of the earthy, if we have here been conformed to the image of the Eternal Son made man, we shall then also bear the image of the heavenly; if we have suffered with Him, with Him we shall also reign.

If it had been God's purpose by the Incarnation only to redeem the world, one drop of His Precious Blood would have sufficed; but such was not His will. He designed that man should not only be reconciled to Him, but also be conformed to His own image; and so He has given us the perfect life to be our pattern, as well as the atoning death to be our redemption.

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[1] Rev. xx. 12.

[2] Phil. iv. 3.

[3] St. Luke x. 20.

He is the Judge in a very different sense from that in which we speak of an earthly judge. For when it is said, "all judgment"[1] is committed unto the Son, there is no law but Himself by which to decide.

He is the Light in which we shall see light. "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,"[2] the light of the book of life will shine on the book of conscience, and the judgment will be accomplished. There will be no trial, no pleading, no weighing of evidence; "the joy of the Lord" will open our lips in praise and adoration, or (which may God avert!) we shall be speechless, self-condemned, before even we hear His voice pronounce our sentence.

The saints, then, are they who are in some degree like their Master, who even while on earth were conformed to His image. There is for them "no condemnation," because they are "in Christ Jesus."[3] He is the "way of holiness";[4] He is the fulfilment of that promise made to Isaiah: "Thine eyes shall see thy teachers, and thine ears shall hear a word behind thee saying, This is the way, walk ye in it."[5]

The Christian knows what he has to do—to follow Christ, to be with Him; and he knows how great helps are provided to enable him to do this.

And yet, how often does not the thought come:

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[1] St. John v. 22.
[2] 1 Cor. xv. 52.
[3] Rom. viii. 1.
[4] Isa. xxxv. 8.
[5] Isa. xxx. 21.

"Who is sufficient for these things?"[1] We are inclined to repeat the question once addressed to our Lord: "Who then can be saved?"[2] If His perfect life is to try our life of imperfection; His words, our words; His actions, our deeds; how shall we be able to stand in that day? And yet, is it not ungrateful to make that life, set before us at so much cost, a reason for despair? This suggests two thoughts: (1) the difficulty of salvation; (2) the possibility of salvation.

(1) We know well that there are numbers who would have us believe that all will be saved in the end; that God is so merciful that He will somehow, and somewhere, force salvation on those who have here rejected it.

All we can reply is, that we have no ground for supposing anything of the kind; that "eternal life" is everywhere in Holy Writ in contrast to "eternal death"; and that if the one is to end, so must the other.

Indeed, the way of life is nowhere said to be an easy or pleasant way, except in a spiritual sense.

Throughout the Word of God, eternal life is spoken of as difficult of attainment, but yet within the reach of all who care to take the trouble to obtain it. "Impossible" to man, as man; "possible," as all things are, to man supported by, and endowed with, the grace of God.

Now, the thought that salvation is difficult should not act as a discouragement, but as a spur to effort.

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[1] 2 Cor. ii. 16.

[2] St. Matt. xix. 25.

Life is full of things which are difficult in themselves, and yet are daily accomplished. It is not easy to acquire skill in some work we desire to do; the painter, the sculptor, the musician, the linguist, all tell us that there are difficulties in the way of becoming skilled in their arts or accomplishments. The musician is not born with a knowledge of music, though he may be endowed with many essential gifts of ear and touch. But who that is worthy of life at all would allow a difficulty to bar the way to success?

And so in the science of the saints. The imitation or following of Christ is difficult; we must count the cost, expect the cross to press a little hardly now and then, deny ourselves, endure hardness, fight the good fight, run the weary race, if we would attain "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."[1]

> "Life with its way before thee lies;
> Christ is the path, and Christ the prize."

Nor are we left in doubt by our Divine Lord that the saved are a great multitude. Look at the parable of the Ten Virgins;[2] five are wise, five foolish. It was not difficulty, but *folly*, that made but five ready to meet their Lord. But even so, we have half the whole number brought before us as going into the wedding. Look, again, at the parable of the Wheat and the Tares.[3] Our Lord tells us that His angels shall gather the evil from among the good. Does not this suggest that the good outnumber the bad? otherwise surely it would have been the good gathered from among the evil. So, again, it is in the parable of the Marriage Feast. The wedding is furnished with guests, and one—only one—has not on the wedding garment. Doubtless the one is typical of many, but yet the many are but as *one* compared with the "multitude which no man could number, clothed with white robes,"[1] who are shown as before the throne of God in heaven. Once again, in the parable of the Ten Talents, one servant only is bound hand and foot and cast out where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

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[1] Eph. iv. 13. [2] St. Matt. xxv. 1–13. [3] St. Matt. xiii. 24–30.

Let us be sure then that there is no *difficulty* in salvation which any will dare to plead in that day.

Our Lord is not a hard Master; He will condemn none for what they could not do; therefore we may be certain, when we speak of His life being the book of judgment, and His example the standard of perfection, there is no cause to turn the love, which has given us that life to learn from, into an excuse for discouragement and servile fear. If He came to seek and to save; if He has left the ninety-and-nine—the holy angels—to seek the one sheep that was lost, how can we fear that any who *seek Him* will be lost?

Rather—"Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out"[2] is the promise of Him Who is the Truth. But here let us take this thought of warning: in almost all the parables the lost are apparently condemned, not so much for what the world would call great sins, as on account of spiritual death, resulting from spiritual sloth. Many of those who are for ever shut out from all that makes the happiness of heaven, at one time or another made some effort to follow Christ; but the first fervour died away: their love grew more and more dim, then it flickered and sank down, and finally went out altogether. Then, when the sudden cry was heard: "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!" all was confusion; and on the night wind there floated that voice of despair: "Too late! too late!"

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[1] Rev. vii. 9.

[2] St. John vi. 37.

"Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come"[1] has been the command ever present to the saints of God; there is no time for spiritual sleep.

The saints have not found the way of life altogether a smooth way; but it is equally clear that they have passed safely along it, and have won their crowns. Their example is now held up before us by the Church, in order to help us to make the effort here, that we may be numbered with them "in glory everlasting."

The servant, in this matter, as in others, is not above his Master. The Redeemer trod the way of the Passion before He passed to His joyful Resurrection.

The Mother of God has felt the sword pierce her own most pure heart. The vision of Mary, clothed with grief by the Cross of Calvary, comes before that other vision of the Queen in a vesture of gold, at the right hand of the King of glory.

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[1] St. Matt. xxiv. 42.

The stones poured like hail around the dying Stephen before his eyes beheld the heavens opened, and One like unto the Son of Man holding forth the crown of life.

One after another the friends of God come before us in sharp and cruel strife, fighting their way towards the rest of God. And we? Is there to be no fight for us? Yes, indeed! it may be seen by no eye but the eye of God; but the rule of life kept, when nature rebels; pride subdued by the grace of Him Who is "meek and lowly of heart"; the bitter trial of doubt, piercing our very soul, perhaps, with agony, but overcome by a faith strong and unflinching, because it knows in Whom it has believed; the dying out of the joy of the presence of God, the sharing in that mysterious desolation of spirit which in our Master led to the cry: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"—are not these trials? Could we hope to pass through them *without* His example? Is it not just that which, instead of discouraging us, seems to offer, like the ark of old, a shelter in which we may be borne up above these floods which perhaps have well-nigh gone over our soul? Shall not the Sacred Heart of Jesus speak words of hope to our faint hearts, when the struggle seems long and weary and monotonous, and we feel half inclined to give it up as beyond our strength? Old temptations that we hoped were buried long ago come out of their graves with a fresh vigour to attack us; the past rises up and clouds our vision; all seems dark, and God is hidden from our sight:—

> "When passion storms are loud and high,
> And, brooding o'er remembered sin,
> The heart dies down—O mightiest then,
> Come ever true, come ever near,
> And wake our slumbering love again,
> Spirit of God's most Holy Fear."

Sursum corda!—let us look up and take courage; for there, "safe landed on the eternal shore," are shown us not only a few great and glorious saints, but "a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues," who answer the question of the text—"Are there *few* that be saved?"

This host of the redeemed have not been without sin, but they have "washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb"; they have been tempted, tried, and weary, as we often are; they have come "out of great tribulation"; but they have persevered, and now they rest from their labours. They are "before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple." Their presence in the Church Triumphant is a continual encouragement to those who are still in the Church Militant on earth.

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) St. Matt. xiii. 3–9. Eternal life is a seed or germ planted in the soul at Baptism. It must be cherished and tended, that it may live and grow and bring forth fruit. Eternal life is ours *here* as well as hereafter. All who are in "a state of grace," are in "a state of salvation."

(2) 1 Cor. xiii. 10–12. Love is the life of God in the soul. In heaven we shall know God perfectly; and the more we know, the more we must love Him.

(3) Rev. xxii. 1–6. The blessedness of seeing God is part of the joy of heaven. "They shall see His face." Purified from all sin, the eyes of the soul are opened "to behold the fair beauty of the Lord." (Ps. xxvii. 4.) This vision transforms the redeemed into the likeness of God. (1 St. John iii. 2.)

(4) St. John xii. 23–27. Our Lord promises that where He is, there shall His servants be. He ascended into heaven, and thither "the spirits of just men made perfect" may freely enter. In the resurrection the joy is completed by the union of soul and body; but, before this, when "absent from the body," St. Paul knew he should be "present with the Lord." (2 Cor. v. 8.)

(5) Rev. v. 9–14. The blessedness of knowing God perfectly includes the joy of worshipping Him acceptably.

(6) Rev. xxi. 4, 10–21. "Grant that we may come to those unspeakable joys which Thou hast prepared for them that unfeignedly love Thee." "Make us to be numbered with Thy saints in glory everlasting."

XXXVI.

THE SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE ADVENT

The Five Barley Loaves

Prophecy

"He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness." (Ps. cvii. 9.)

Jesus Christ

"How many loaves have ye? Go and see." (St. Mark vi. 38.)

The Soul

"Yet do I remember the time past; I muse upon all Thy works; yea, I exercise myself in the works of Thy hands." (Ps. cxliii. 5.)

XXXVI.

The Five Barley Loaves

IN coming to the last Sunday of the Christian year our thoughts naturally turn to the past as well as to the future.

The Church's year brings with it a perfect declaration of the whole gospel. The life of Jesus Christ is set before us in all its fulness and all its gifts of grace.

The observance of the seasons of the Church ensures the proclamation of the entire faith of the gospel. The Church received the charge to preach the gospel, and she must do that in the order in which she received it. That Divinely ordained order she follows scrupulously. In Advent she calls upon us to listen to the Forerunner, to prepare for the twofold coming of her Lord as Saviour and Judge. During the Christmas and Epiphany seasons she invites us to be present at the chief mysteries of the Sacred Infancy. During Lent the shadow of the Passion falls upon the Church, and she reveals to us all that appertains to the Cross. The Easter Festival prepares for the final glory of the Ascension; while at Pentecost the Divine

Paraclete is sent forth to inspire the Church. The long weeks after Trinity witness to the way in which the sacred mysteries of the Incarnate Life are brought home to the soul, and realised in the lives of her children.

The festivals of the Saints are so many evidences of the fulfilment of the declaration: "My word . . . that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."[1]

In the Gospel for this Sunday[2] we have a mystical, as well as a literal, fulfilment of these words. One lesson—of the many that are contained in the account of the feeding of the five thousand—is especially appropriate to the end of the Liturgical Year. Our Lord had miraculously fed the five thousand with the five barley loaves, and "when they were filled, He said unto His disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost."

There can be no doubt that in the sacred Scriptures there is a mystical meaning in numbers. The meanings of sacred numbers have come down to us through a tolerably consistent tradition. The number seven is an example of this; it occurs far too often to be meaningless or merely accidental.[1] It is evidently the covenant number—the number of perfection.

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[1] Isa. lv. 11–13.

[2] St. John vi. 5–14.

In this miracle, the five loaves and the two fishes, making seven portions of food, may therefore represent the providence of God in all the provision that He has made for the souls and bodies of men. Or they may stand for the seven mysteries—or sacraments—by which God perpetuates His Church, and through which He satisfies all the needs of the individual soul as well as of His mystical Body taken as a whole. The fish was a favourite symbol in the Church of the catacombs for Jesus Christ.[2] The two fishes may symbolise the life that is given through the waters of Baptism, and the life that is nourished by our Lord's own sacred Body. The two great Sacraments of the gospel—the one imparting life, and the other containing life—may well have been figured by the food that belonged to the animate creation.

But there is another interpretation that concerns itself only with the "five barley loaves." What are they? The number five is well worth consideration in Holy Scripture. It seems to be the number of sacred order.[3]

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[1] See Abp. TRENCH on *Epistles to the Seven Churches*, pp. 62–70.

[2] See vol. i. p. 502.

[3] Note: The five books of Moses; the numberless fives of the Tabernacle and Temple; the five smooth stones with which David armed

In any case we have here the mention of *five* thousand, who are fed with the *five* barley loaves.

In looking back over the past twelve months we may notice five means of grace that our Lord has given us in order to foster our life and satisfy our spiritual hunger.

(1) *Prayer.* How have we used the opportunities for prayer that have been offered to us since last Advent?

There are our private prayers, which should surely be carefully presented before God at least twice during the day—morning and evening. Have we a definite plan for these prayers, and do they include adoration, thanksgiving, and intercession for others, as well as petitions for our own needs? Do we value rightly the making of acts of faith, hope, and love? Are we watchful over self-examination, and real in our acts of contrition and in our resolutions of amendment? We should carefully examine our method of prayer, and see if the reason why so little seems to come of our prayers may not be that we "ask amiss."[1] "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost."

(2) *Sacraments.* It is hardly possible to exaggerate the importance of coming to the Sacraments properly

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himself; the five sheep, the five measures of corn, and five damsels with which Abigail propitiated David; the five lintels and side-posts of the Oracle of God's House; the five wounds of our Lord; the five wise and foolish virgins; the five sparrows sold for a farthing; the five brethren of Dives; the five porches, etc. See *Mahan's Works*, vol. ii.

[1] St. James iv. 3.

prepared. They are not charms. Far better, for example, to communicate only three times a year, after careful preparation, than to allow ourselves weekly or more frequent approach to the altar without thought or earnestness, or any effort to use the grace received. St. Paul's warning words, "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself,"[1] have evidently reference to those who neglected self-examination, and consequently approached the Holy Communion without consciousness of their sin, or desiring deliverance from its power. Hence he says, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup."[2]

Our aim should be to approach the Holy Communion well prepared as frequently as possible. We need its support, and we know that it was not meant only for the perfect—if such there be—but for those also who desire perfection, and are deeply conscious how far off they are from having attained it. "I am not come to call the righteous," said our Lord, "but sinners to repentance."[3]

Again, our use of the Sacrament of Penance, or our neglect of its use, will furnish us with further matter for self-questioning. Do we realise that no absolution is valid unless we have real sorrow in our will—real determination to amend our lives according to God's Holy Word?

(3) *Holy Scripture* is another means of grace that

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[1] 1 Cor. xi. 29. (See margin.) [2] 1 Cor. xi. 28. [3] St. Matt. ix. 13.

God has given to us; and for the use or neglect of which we shall have to give account. The words of our Lord have an almost sacramental power. No spiritual life is safe unless it is continually in contact with the Incarnate Word, and with the words of the Word of God. The daily offices of the Church are full of Holy Scripture, and our own private reading of God's Word should be a regular duty of our spiritual life. In looking back through the past year, have we nothing to amend in the future in this respect?

(4) *Sunday.* The proportion of one day in seven, set apart especially for the worship of God, has been observed from the beginning. Our Sundays should be days dedicated to God by something more than a brief half-hour's attendance at the Eucharist. No observance of the Lord's Day can for a moment be considered worthy that wilfully neglects the one service of Divine ordinance, but this service of the altar should be supplemented by attendance at the Choir offices. Sunday is the Christian Sabbath—or day of rest. Surely there is not less a Divine benediction upon its observance than upon the keeping of the Jewish Sabbath? "If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the

earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."[1]

Once again, we may examine our way of spending Sunday, and see if there be not something to amend.

(5) *Festivals and Fasts* are also a means of grace. They bring before us the mysteries of the Gospel, or the lives of the Saints, and they cannot be neglected without great loss. St. Paul wrote to his converts, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."[2] We must learn to know the lives of the Saints if we would follow the pattern they have set us of holy living.

In these five means of grace we have, then, as it were, five barley loaves. Our Lord has been offering them for the sustenance of His Church, and now calls upon us to "gather up the fragments that remain," and to let the twelve months of the year that opens with Advent Sunday be replenished with what we have gathered from the past: "There was taken up of fragments that remained to them twelve baskets."

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[1] Isa. lviii. 13, 14.

[2] 1 Cor. xi. 1.

PASSAGES FOR READING

(1) Eccles. xi. 1–7. God is always giving us "all good things," but He desires that we should use, not waste, them.

(2) Eccles. xii. 1–8. The way to "remember" our Creator is to use well all the means that keep Him in our remembrance. Hence the "means of grace," well used, impart a "hope of glory" when the spirit of man returns whence it came—to God.

(3) Eccles. xii. 13, 14. The fear of God is the *beginning* of wisdom. Obedience may spring from servile fear, or from filial fear which is closely allied to love. In the Old Testament "the fear of God" was the chief motive for obedience. Our Lord revealed the higher motive of love.

(4) 1 Cor. xi. 23–34. When we judge ourselves, we correct that which must be corrected. The fault that is amended here, by the grace of God, will not need to be condemned hereafter.

(5) St. Matt. xxv. 14–30. God will require an account of the use which we have made of His gifts—natural and supernatural. He seeks not only a return of what He gave, but that we should have increased His gifts.

(6) 1 St. John iii. 1–5. Our relationship with the Father is the ground of our confidence in Him that He will supply all our needs.

XXXVII.

THE FEAST OF THE VISITATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

The Voice of Salutation

Prophecy

"O thou fairest among women, go thy way." (Song of Sol. i. 8.)

Jesus Christ

"When ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it." (St. Matt. x. 12, 13.)

The Soul

"Blessed art thou among women." (St. Luke i. 42.)

XXXVII.

The Voice of Salutation

THE following is a Homily of the Venerable Bede (eighth century) on the gospel narrative of the visitation[1]:—

"Since the human race had perished by the contagion of the pestilence of pride, it was fitting that, at the very outset of the time of salvation, some manifestation should take place of the humility by which we are healed. And since by the rashness of woman death entered the world, it was also fitting that, as a sign of returning life, devout women should strive to outdo each other in services of humility and piety. First of all, therefore, did the Blessed Mother of God, venerable no less from her virginal purity than from her piety, show how the road of humility leads to the heights of the heavenly country. The citizens of that country are as the angels of God, who neither marry nor are given in marriage. Who, then, so well as that unsullied Virgin could teach us the glory of that heavenly life, and the virtues by which we may attain to it?

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[1] July 2nd. This feast, which holds a place in the Calendars of the Anglican and Roman Communions, was instituted by Urban IV. in the fourteenth century.

"No sooner, therefore, had she enjoyed the angelic vision and annunciation, no sooner did she know what heavenly Child she should bring forth, than, instead of being elated by these heavenly favours as if they were her due, to fit herself still more for the gifts of God she fixed her every thought on the preservation of humility, and answered the archangel: 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word.' And not to angels only, but to men also does she show humility; and such is her height of virtue, she humbles herself even to her inferiors. Who is ignorant that a virgin consecrated to God holds a higher rank than a devout married woman? Who can doubt that the Mother of the eternal King is rightly preferred to the mother of a soldier in His army? Yet Mary remembered how Holy Scripture says: 'The greater thou art, the more humble thyself.'[1] And when the angel had returned to heaven she arose and went into the hill-country. Though she carries her God in her womb, she seeks the home and the familiar intercourse of God's servants. She enters the house of Zachary and salutes Elizabeth, whom she knows to be the mother of the servant and forerunner of our Lord. She journeys not in doubt of the announcement that had been made to her, nor to test the angel's word by a woman's evidence; no, she goes to congratulate her fellow-servant on the gift of God, and to give to her aged kinswoman such careful service as a youthful maiden could bestow.

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[1] Ecclus. iii. 18.

"'*And it came to pass that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost.*'

"When the Blessed Virgin opens her lips to salute, immediately both Elizabeth and John are filled with the Holy Ghost. Both are taught by the same Spirit. Elizabeth understands the dignity of her who salutes, and blesses and venerates her as the Mother of her Lord. John understands that his Lord is carried in the Virgin's womb. His tongue cannot speak, but he salutes Him by the exultation of his soul; and even before his birth shows by such signs as are in his power how gladly and how devoutly he will undertake in his youth the office of Precursor. Then was accomplished what the angel had foretold: 'He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb.'

"'*And Elizabeth cried out with a loud voice.*'

"Well does she utter a great cry, when she recognises gifts so great. Well does she recognise with a loud voice the bodily presence of Him Who is present everywhere. It is a loud voice, not lifted high in clamour, but filled with devotion. It was impossible for her to praise God in low tones, who was herself lifted up by the fulness of the gifts of the Holy Spirit; who bore him in her womb than whom none is greater among the sons of women; and who rejoiced in His coming Who was conceived by a Virgin, and Who should be called and should be the Son of the Most High.

"'*And she said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.*'

"Not only blessed among women, but with an eminent blessing among all blessed women. Nor is He the fruit of her womb blessed after the manner of the saints, but, as the Apostle says: 'Of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, Who is over all things, God blessed for ever.'[1] Of the origin of this fruit the Psalmist speaks in mystic words when he says: 'The Lord will give goodness, and our earth shall yield her fruit.'[2] The Lord 'gave goodness' when He decreed to save the human race from guilt by His only-begotten Son; He 'gave goodness' when, by the grace of the Holy Ghost, He consecrated to Himself a temple in the Virgin's womb. And 'our earth gave its fruit' when the same Virgin, whose body was of our earth, gave birth to a Son co-equal to His Father in His divinity, though consubstantial with His Mother in the truth of His humanity.

"Isaias also, looking forward to the time of man's redemption, says: 'In that day the bud of the Lord shall be in magnificence and glory, and the fruit of the earth shall be high.'[3]

"The bud of the Lord was indeed in glory when the everlasting Son of God appeared in time in the flesh, and by the greatness of His heavenly virtue shone before the world. The fruit of the earth was high when, in the power of His resurrection, God raised to the highest heaven in immortal glory the flesh which He had taken from our nature in its mortality. Truly, then, is it said: 'Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.' Incomparably blessed is she who received the glory of that divine Bud, yet preserved the crown of her integrity. Blessed among women, by whose virginal childbirth the malediction of the first mother is turned aside from the sons of women. Blessed is the fruit of her womb, by Whom we have received both the seed of incorruption and the fruit of the heavenly inheritance which we had lost in Adam. Truly and singularly blessed, Who did not after His birth receive grace from the Lord of blessings as we may, but Who to save the world Himself came blessed in the name of the Lord.

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[1] Rom. ix. 5 (R.V.). [2] Ps. lxxxv. 12. [3] Isa. iv. 2.

"'*And whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me?*'

"O, what great humility in the soul of this prophetess! How true is that word of the Lord: 'To whom shall I have respect, but to him that is poor and little and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at My words?'[1] Elizabeth recognised her visitor as the Mother of God as soon as she beheld her. But she finds in herself no such merit as to entitle her to a visit from so great a guest. The Spirit Who had bestowed on her the gift of prophecy conferred on her also that of humility.

"'*For behold, as soon as the voice of thy salutation*

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[1] Isa. lxvi. 2.

sounded in my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy.'

"By the revelation of the same Spirit, Elizabeth understood that leaping of her infant to mean that the Mother had come of Him Whose forerunner he should be. How wondrous, how quick is the operation of the Holy Ghost! There is no delay in learning where the Holy Ghost is teacher. In one and the same moment with the voice of the salutation arises the joy of the infant; for when the voice reached the ears of the body the power of the Spirit entered the heart of the listener, and set on fire not only the mother but the child also with the love of the Lord Who had come to them. Wherefore also this mother of our Lord's Precursor announces publicly to those who are present what she had learned in secret. For she adds:—

"'*Blessed art thou that hast believed, because those things shall be accomplished that were spoken to thee by the Lord.*'

"In a wondrous way the Spirit with Whom Elizabeth was filled gave her the knowledge of things present, things past, and things future. She shows that she has learnt things present, when she calls the Blessed Virgin the Mother of her Lord, and calls the fruit of her womb blessed. She proves her knowledge of the past, when she alludes to the words of the angel to Mary, and to Mary's faith. And she intimates her knowledge of the future, when she declares that the things that have been foretold will be certainly fulfilled."

XXXVIII.

THE FEAST OF THE PASSING OF BLESSED MARY[1]

With Christ

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[1] A Festival has been kept from very early times in honour of the death of our Blessed Lady. The Feast appears to have been observed by the whole Church, East and West, before the sixth century. The Feast is called by the Greeks κοίμησις, "the falling asleep"; and μετάστασις, "the passing beyond." By the Latins it has been called *dormitio*, "the falling asleep"; *transitus*, "the passing"; and *assumptio*, "the assumption." The Feast is still observed throughout the Christian Church, East and West, except in the Church of England. It was removed from the Anglican Calendar in the sixteenth century.

It is certain that the B.V.M. died, and equally certain that her most pure soul entered heaven at her death. No Protestant or Catholic would for a moment question this fact, and yet this is all that the Feast of the Assumption commemorates. The bodily assumption after her death is not a matter *de fide* even in the Roman Church.

The fact that many Anglicans live in countries where the Feast is observed publicly, and that many more observe it privately—as well as the hope that its Liturgical observance may be restored to us—has seemed quite sufficient warrant for giving a Reading on the Assumption.

Prophecy

"Rise up, My love, My fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone." (Song of Sol. ii. 10, 11.)

Jesus Christ

"I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (St. John xiv. 2, 3.)

The Soul

"Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved?" (Song of Sol. viii. 5.)

XXXVIII.

With Christ

"Who is she, on whom those Divine eyes, radiant with His Godhead, which survey all things in heaven and on earth, must rest with an especial love, with the love of a Son to His Mother? What must be the love and humility of that highest of the heavenly Hierarchy, whether it be St. Michael or any of the Seraphim, belonging to those ranks which never fell, that he adores the condescension of God, not only in taking into Himself our nature, but in placing nearest to Himself—the God-Man—His purely human Mother, above himself, above every possible creature? For, grand and magnificent and highly endowed as may be any the highest creature which God could create, none could have the nearness of her, the Mother of God."—Dr. PUSEY.

IN the Book of Ecclesiastes it is written: "A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth."[1]

The Church usually keeps the day of the death of her saints as their Festival; for she holds that on that day the saints entered into heaven, and began their true life, whereas on their birthday they only began their earthly existence. Moreover, as men usually are conceived and born in sin, their birthday pertains to the natural order, and not to the order of grace.

The observance of Christmas Day, the Nativity of our Lord, is of course the celebration of the birth of One Who was not either conceived or born in sin.

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[1] Eccles. vii. 1.

The Church also keeps a Festival in honour of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist,[1] as we are taught that he was sanctified from his mother's womb, *i.e.* before birth.

For the same reason the Feast of the Nativity of the B.V.M. is kept;[2] because, according to the tradition of the Church, she too was sanctified before birth.[3]

The death of our Lord is of course commemorated on Good Friday.

The death of St. John the Baptist is commemorated on August 29th; and, until the sixteenth century, the death of the Blessed Virgin was remembered throughout the whole Church on August 15th. The Feast was removed then from our Calendar, not because the Church of England doubted that the Blessed Virgin died, but because of the growth of her cultus, which was supposed to be fostered by the remembrance of her entry into glory; and because of the popular belief that her body as well as her soul shared in this entry into heaven. The term "assumption," however, does *not* imply a bodily assumption; it "has not infrequently been used for the *taking up into* bliss of the souls of departed saints, the day of their death being called the day of their assumption."[4]

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[1] June 24th in Anglican, Roman, and Greek Calendars.

[2] September 8th in Anglican, Roman, and Greek Calendars.

[3] This sanctification does not involve the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception.

[4] BLUNT'S *Theological Dictionary*.

All that the Festival of the Assumption—or "Repose," as the Greeks still call it—of the Blessed Virgin takes for granted is, that what St. Paul said was true of all those who die in the Lord and are perfected in holiness, was also true of the Mother of our Lord.[1]

The Festival—observed through the whole Eastern Church, and throughout the greater part of the West—is therefore based upon fact and not upon legend. It implies nothing remarkable in the death of the Blessed Virgin beyond that, while others may need some purification before they can enter heaven, she was no sooner "absent from the body" than she was "present with the Lord." That our Lady is with her Son in heaven is the belief of all who do not hold the Jewish theory that no soul can enter heaven before the general judgment.

Bishop Pearson, in his treatise *On the Creed*, writes:—

"If Elizabeth cried out with so loud a voice, 'Blessed art thou among women,' when Christ was but newly conceived in her womb, what expressions of honour and admiration can we think sufficient, now that Christ is in heaven, and that Mother with Him?"

We can only regret, therefore, that the innovators of the sixteenth century were allowed to deprive the Church in this land of so time-honoured a Festival, and one commemorative of so plain a fact; and pray that what they did may again be undone, and—under whatever title—the ancient Festival commemorative of the "passing of Mary" to her reward may be authoritatively restored to us.

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[1] 2 Cor. v. 8.

Our Lord, before His Passion, comforted His disciples by the promise that their separation from Him should not be permanent. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."[1] Hence the Church teaches that, as soon as may be, they who "sleep in Jesus" are, though absent from the body, present with the Lord.

They enjoy the vision of God, and the only increase of their joy will be in the reception of the glorified body in the resurrection at the last day. The spirits of just men made perfect are even now with Christ. In the hymn of the late Bishop Wordsworth this is beautifully expressed:—

"Now they reign in heavenly glory,
  Now they walk in golden light,
Now they drink, as from a river,
  Holy bliss and infinite.
Love and peace they taste for ever,
  And all truth and knowledge see
In the Beatific Vision
  Of the Blessed Trinity."

This belief is held not only by the great historic branches of the Church, but also by all Protestant Christians.

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[1] St. John xiv. 1–3.

It is, however, an article of faith that the souls of the faithful will at the day of judgment be clothed again with the body. Hence they who hold that, after her death, the Blessed Virgin was raised again to life, and her body as well as her soul assumed into heaven, do but think that for her the moment was anticipated which hereafter will come to all. They do but piously hold that even now she is in "the likeness"[1] of Him Who is the Resurrection and the Life: that she has already received the crown of righteousness which *all* who are in Christ will one day receive.

And there are, we believe, others in heaven too in the fulness of the resurrection life.

Moses is buried, but "no man knoweth of his sepulchre";[2] for it is an old belief that he was taken up from the earth and is with the saints of God.

Elijah, rapt away in a chariot of fire,[3] finds his purification and his resurrection in his mysterious passage from the visible to the eternal world—"caught up . . . to meet the Lord in the air"[4]—coming for a moment to confirm the witness of the law and the prophets to the Christ at the time of His Transfiguration, when "there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with Him."[5] Enoch, who "was not, for God took him"[6]—"translated that he should not see death."[1] These are, we believe, in body and soul, already in enjoyment of their reward.

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[1] Rom. vi. 5.
[2] Deut. xxxiv. 6.
[3] 2 Kings ii. 11.
[4] 1 Thess. iv. 17.
[5] St. Matt. xvii. 3.
[6] Gen. v. 24.

And there may be others too: those, for instance, who "came out of the graves after His Resurrection and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many";[2] did all these undergo death a second time? or, having been held captive by death, were they among those who accompanied Him Who "led captivity captive,"[3] when He ascended up into heaven—the proof of His having overcome death, not only for Himself, but for all? He the conqueror; they, the spoils. "The Lord of hosts . . . the Lord strong and mighty, even the Lord mighty in battle."[4]

What shall we say of these? It is no dogma of faith, but it is the belief of Holy Church that these all, being raised from the dead, died no more, but were, in some way, like Christ the firstfruits of the dead, taken away when their time came—assumed up into heaven. However this may be, the belief in our Lady's Assumption has taken possession of the Church. Of the details of her death we know nothing, and the legend of her bodily Assumption is of late origin. A great Master has put the legend into beautiful words.

"Her departure made no noise in the world. The Church went about her common duties, preaching, converting, suffering: there were persecutions, there was fleeing from place to place, there were martyrs, there were triumphs; at length the rumour spread abroad that the Mother of God was no longer on earth. Pilgrims went to and fro; they sought for her relics, but they found them not: did she die at Ephesus, or did she die at Jerusalem? reports varied, but her tomb could not be pointed out, or if it was found it was open; and instead of her pure and fragrant body, there was a growth of lilies from the earth which she had touched. So inquirers went home marvelling and waiting for further light. And then it was said how that when her dissolution was at hand, and her soul was to pass in triumph before the judgment-seat of her Son, the Apostles were suddenly gathered together in the place, even in the holy City, to bear part in the joyful ceremonial; how they buried her with fitting rites; how the third day when they came to the tomb, they found it empty, and angelic choirs with glad voices were heard singing day and night the glories of their risen Queen.

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[1] Heb. xi. 5.

[2] St. Matt. xxvii. 53.

[3] Ps. lxviii. 18.

[4] Ps. xxiv. 8, 10.

"But, however we feel towards the details of this history (nor is there anything in it which will be unwelcome or difficult to piety), so much cannot be doubted from the consent of the whole Catholic world and the revelations made to holy souls, that as is befitting, she is, soul and body, with her Son and God in heaven, and that, therefore, we may celebrate not only her death, but her Assumption."

So writes Dr. Newman; and this belief is no mere

Roman legend, but is the common belief of the great Eastern Communions as well as of the Latin Church.

The idea of a bodily Assumption is, however, merely a pious opinion, and in no way of the essence of the Feast of the Assumption. It seems, indeed, most fitting that the body of her from whom our Lord took His flesh should not be allowed to go to corruption, but should be raised in incorruption, by anticipation of that resurrection which otherwise is yet in store for Blessed Mary.

St. Aelred[1] writes that, up to the day of her death, "The Blessed Virgin knew her Son according to the flesh; for though after His Ascension all her desires and love were with Him in heaven, yet, so long as she remained in the flesh, the memory of what He was in the flesh could not leave her. His words, His deeds, and the image of the beauty of His face were ever in her mind. But to-day she passed away from this world, and went to the heavenly kingdom, and began to contemplate His glory and the divinity of His Father; and her joy was made full, and her desire was accomplished. 'I have found,' she says, 'Him Whom my soul loveth.'[2]

"Up to that day she might have said, 'I sought Him, but found Him not';[3] but now she adds, 'I will rise now, and go about the city, in the streets, and in the broad ways, I will seek Him Whom my soul loveth.'[4]

[1] Abbot of Rievaulx in the twelfth century.

[2] Cant. iii. 4.

[3] Cant. iii. 1.

[4] Cant. iii. 2.

"By this city I understand the heavenly Jerusalem, whose streets are paved with pure gold, and ever resound with alleluias. 'I will arise,' she says. Did I dare, I would say that the Blessed Mother of God first laid down her body, and then rose again in it to everlasting life. But though I do not dare to affirm this, since I cannot prove it if anyone should gainsay it, yet I dare to think it. But one thing I dare most surely to affirm, that to-day the Blessed Virgin—'whether in the body or out of the body, I know not, God knoweth'—ascended into heaven, and in the eagerness of her soul went round the whole of that heavenly city.

"She saw the white robes of the virgins, the rosy crowns of the martyrs, the thrones of the apostles, and in them all she beheld the reign of her Son. And now she finds Him so perfectly, so blissfully, that up to that day she seems never to have found Him. Beyond the reach of all the saints to such a knowledge of the Divinity does she come, that now she cries that she has indeed found Him Whom her soul loveth.

"'The watchmen that go about the city found me.'[1] These watchmen are the angels who guard the city of God, that is, the holy Church, and protect it from the attacks and ambushes of the devil. Most certainly the whole host of angels went out to-day to meet the Blessed Mary. They found her in the world, and bore her from the world. But though she beheld the brightness of the angels, their glory and beatitude, this did not satisfy her; but all the more she longed to gaze on Him Whom above all she loved. Therefore she asks: 'Saw ye Him Whom my soul loveth?' And adds: 'It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found Him Whom my soul loveth.'[1] O blessed soul, which passed beyond not only the patriarchs and prophets, the apostles, martyrs, confessors, and virgins, but the angels also, the thrones and dominations, the cherubim and seraphim, and all the host of heaven, and so at length reached its beloved One. Then it found Him, and embraced Him: 'I hold Him,' she says, 'and will not let Him go.' Yes, she holds Him in the embrace of perfect charity, and can never let Him go, because she can never love Him less."

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[1] Cant. iii. 3.

[1] Cant. iii. 3, 4.

XXXIX.

THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

The Dawn of Salvation

Prophecy

"As the lily among thorns, so is My love among the daughters." (Song of Sol. ii. 2.)

Jesus Christ

"Consider the lilies how they grow." (St. Luke xii. 27.)

The Soul

"O Lord that bearest rule, of every wood of the earth, and of all the trees thereof, Thou hast chosen Thee one only vine . . . and of all the flowers thereof one lily." (2 Esdras v. 23, 24.)

XXXIX.

The Dawn of Salvation

"Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?"—SONG OF SOL. vi. 10.

THE birthday of the Blessed Virgin was the dawn that ushered in the radiant brightness of her holy life. We do not know very much of the details of her life: it is hidden from us, except in so far as its story is needful to the Incarnation. What is told to us is full of that quiet simplicity which distinguishes the gospel from the apocryphal histories of other religions, and from the pious imaginations of spiritual writers.

Her birth is, however, a fact we are sure of, although it is not recorded in Holy Writ. During the long ages that had elapsed since the fall of man the eyes of those who watched for the morning were constantly disappointed. The time had not yet come; darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. But at last the fulness of time was reached, and the birth of Mary heralded the near approach of the Sun of Righteousness. Mary was "the woman" whose seed was destined to crush the serpent's head and as such she held her own place in the earliest prophecy of redemption.

In the Song of Songs it is asked: "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?"

Rupert of Deutz,[1] one of the very greatest of mediæval commentators on Holy Scripture, writes on these words:—

"When thou wast born, O Blessed Virgin, then the true Dawn arose on us, the Dawn which heralds the eternal Day; for as each day's dawn is the end of the past night and the beginning of the following day, so thy nativity, of the seed of Abraham, from the illustrious race of David, to whom God made with an oath the promise of blessing, was the end of sorrows, and the beginning of consolations, the end of sadness, and the beginning of our joy. Then we pass from dawn to morn. For when the Holy Ghost came upon thee, and thou, a Virgin, didst conceive a Son, and bring Him forth in Virgin-birth, then, and thenceforward thou wast fair with divine fairness; *fair,* I say, not in any wise, but *as the moon;* for as the moon shines and illuminates with light which is not her own, but derived from the sun, so thou, O most blessed one, hast not of thyself, that thou art so bright, but of grace divine, that thou art full of grace. Lastly, we pass from the moon to the sun. For when thou wast taken up out of this world, and translated to the heavenly hall, then, and thenceforward thou wast *elect as the sun*, elect, I say, for us; for as we adore and worship the Son of God, sprung from thee, the True Sun, the eternal Sun, as Very God, so we honour and venerate thee, as the Mother of Very God, knowing that all honour paid to the Mother, doubtless redounds to the honour of the Son."

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[1] Abbot of Deutz 1135.

"What glory thou above hast won,
By special grace of thy dear Son,
We see not yet, nor dare espy
Thy crownèd form with open eye:
Rather beside the manger meek,
Thee bending with veiled brow we seek,
Or where the Angel in the thrice great Name
Hailed thee, and Jesus to thy bosom came.

"Henceforth, Whom thousand worlds adore,
He calls thee Mother evermore;
Angel nor saint His face may see
Apart from what He took of thee;
How may we choose but name thy name,
Echoing below their high acclaim,
In holy creeds? since earthly song and prayer
Must keep faint time to the dread anthem there."[1]

"And she is *terrible as an army with banners*. How an *army*, one of the sweetest of English poets tells us in his quaint anagram of the name *Mary:*—

'How well her name an *army* doth present,
In whom the Lord of Hosts did pitch His tent!'[2]

[1] KEBLE. [2] GEORGE HERBERT.

"*With banners;* since where the King's pavilion is, there will be the royal standard. And accordingly St. Ambrose says:—

'The Lord a maiden's womb doth fill,
But keeps her stainless maiden still;
The banners there of virtue shine,
Where God is present in His shrine.'"[1]

"Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the *moon?*" The moon borrows all her light from the sun. Hence the fair beauty of Blessed Mary is entirely derived from Jesus Christ, the Sun of Righteousness. It was His Precious Blood that redeemed her; it is with His merits that she shines resplendent; it is His grace that adorns her. He looked upon the lowliness of His handmaiden, called her, justified her, and finally glorified her.

"Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the *sun?*"

The union of the soul with Him Who is the brightness of the Father causes the soul to shine in His glory.

Moses' face shone with this reflected radiance after he had been in the presence of God. How much more glorious in the heavenly country, where the light of the moon is as the light of the sun, must be the brightness of the glory of the redeemed who are for ever united with their glorified Lord?

St. John saw a great wonder in heaven—"a woman clothed with the sun."[1] Mary is clothed with the righteousness of Christ, and her glory is in proportion to her faithfulness while on earth. If "the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day,"[2] what a track of glory must the life of Mary have been! If they who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever, how clear shall be the bright shining of that fair Star of the sea, whom all generations call Blessed? If one star differeth from another star in glory, and in the resurrection this glory finds a parallel, who shall declare the glory of God that is witnessed to by Mary, whose brightness of light is "clear as the sun"?

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[1] *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, Dr. LITTLEDALE.

"Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and *terrible as an army with banners?*" The weakness of Mary as the lowly handmaid of the Lord seems more prominent than her might, so that to be "terrible as an army with banners" hardly appears at first sight a suitable description of the Holy Virgin. And yet it is most true. From the first the Holy Mother was ordained to be the foe of the Evil One. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."[3] God Himself has placed an enmity between Satan and Mary—"thee and the woman," as well as between the seed of the Evil One (the reprobate) and the seed of Jesus Christ (the righteous).

[1] Rev. xii. 1. [2] Prov. iv. 18. [3] Gen. iii. 15.

Hence when the seed of the Evil One sought to dethrone Jesus Christ by a denial of His Divinity, the Council of Ephesus defended the truth of the Incarnation by proclaiming the title of the Mother to be rightly named Θεοτόκος—the God-bearer, the Mother of God Incarnate.

In this way God has again and again shown how He has chosen "the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty."[1] In this way He has not ceased to "put down the mighty from their seat," or to exalt "the humble and meek."

The Nativity of our Lady is therefore a day of gladness in the whole Church Militant, and doubtless it is also a day of rejoicing in the courts of the Lord's House where that Holy Mother is reigning with her Lord and the great multitude of the redeemed, who have finished their course and received the crown of life. The birthday of the "most pure and immaculate Virgin"—as our Bishop Pearson calls her—will be a day of gladness to all who love what God loves; and although He loves all the redeemed He surely loves the Mother of His Only-begotten Son with a special affection. "If Elizabeth cried out with so loud a voice, 'Blessed art thou among women,' when Christ was but newly conceived in her womb; what expressions of honour and admiration can we think sufficient, now that Christ is in heaven, and that Mother with Him? Far be it from any Christian to derogate from that privilege granted her, which is incommunicable to any other. We cannot bear too reverend a regard unto the 'Mother of our Lord,' so long as we give her not that worship which is due unto the Lord Himself. Let us keep the language of the Primitive Church: 'Let her be honoured and esteemed, let Him be worshipped and adored.'"[1]

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[1] 1 Cor. i. 27.

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[1] Bishop PEARSON, *On the Creed.*

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